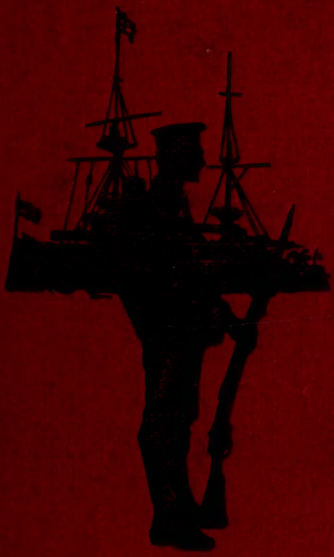

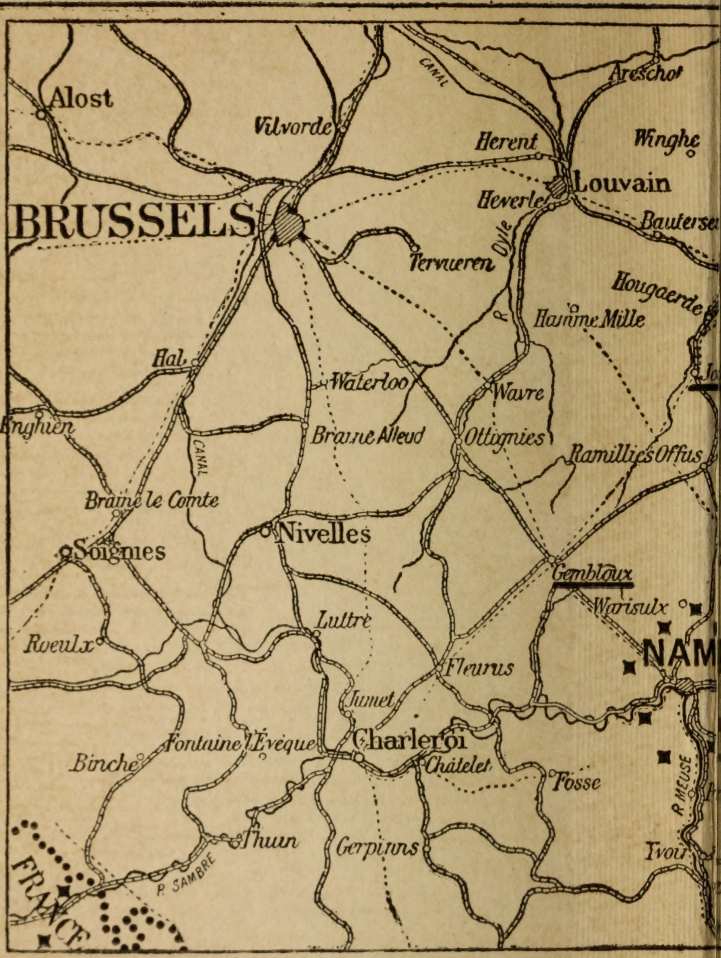

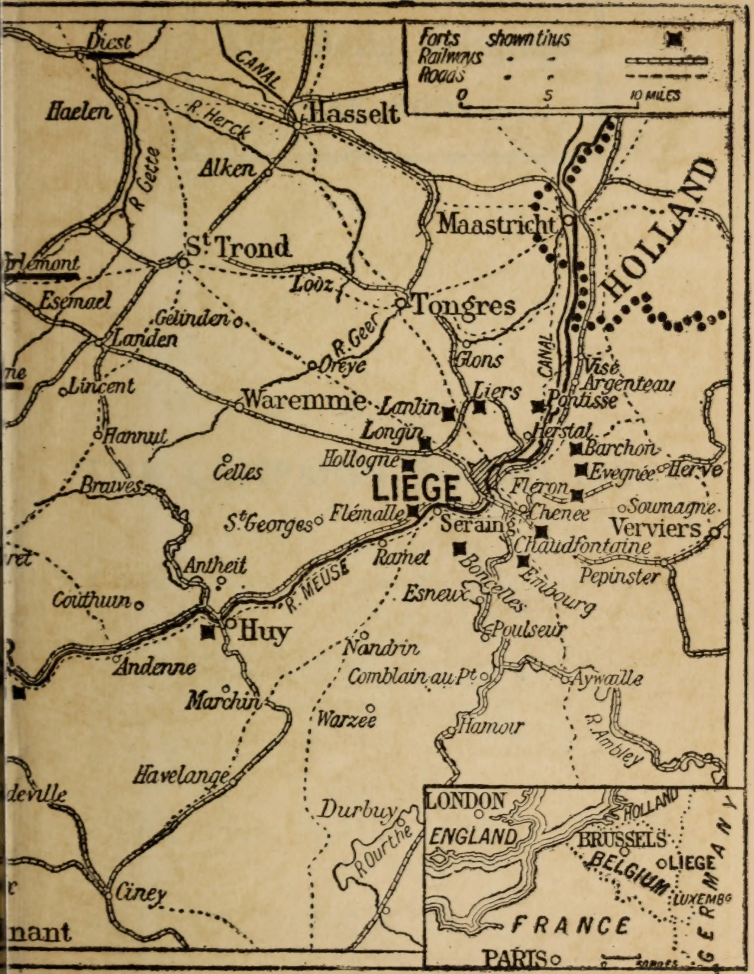

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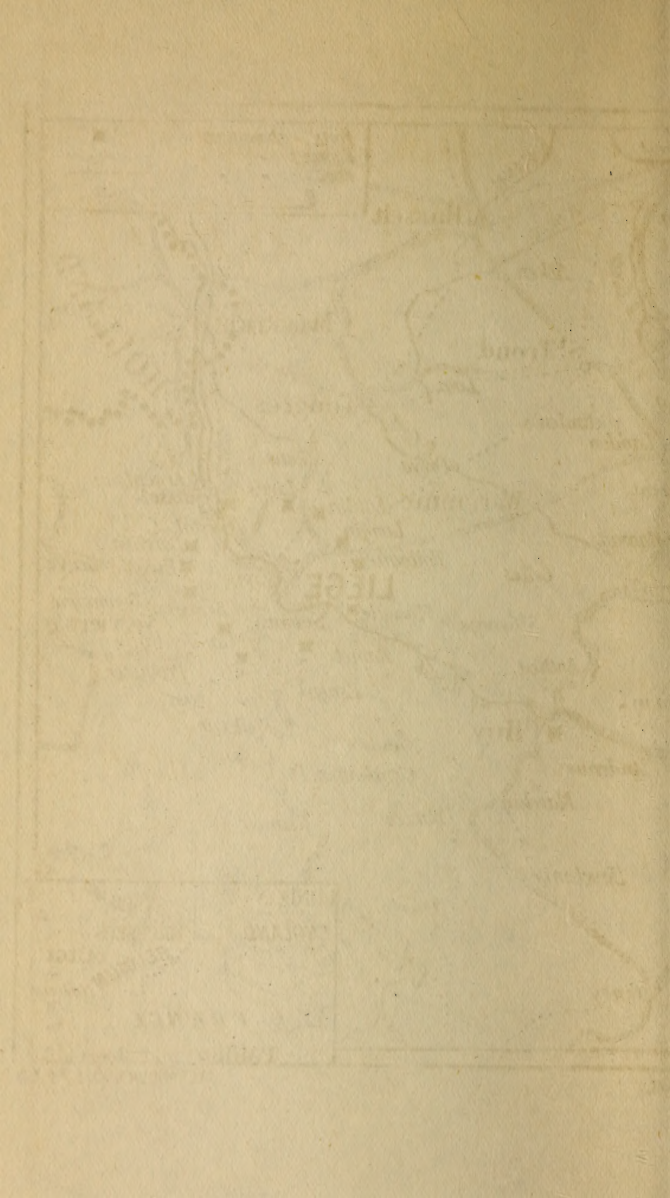

The Daily Telegraph

WAR BOOKS

THE CAMPAIGN ROUND LIÈGE

THE CAMPAIGN ROUND LIÈGE

BY
J. M. KENNEDY

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
W. L. COURTNEY, LL.D

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
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INTRODUCTION

"To attack always, to attack everywhere, and to overlap in the attack" is the essential principle of German military training. This is the principle which is acted upon when hostilities definitely open and the diplomatist retires into the background. There is only one means by which it can be carried into effect, and that is to have overwhelming numbers of men ready to pour into the field and bear down opposing forces by sheer weight. At Liège, at Namur, at Charleroi, or in the Vosges, the mowing down of the invading hosts by rifle or cannon must have seemed to the defensive troops as wearying and useless a task as cutting off the heads of a hydra; for two German soldiers appeared to rise out of the ground for every single one that fell.

This was one great advantage with which

the German army entered upon the war. For years past strategic railways have been under construction on the Belgian border—railways designed, not for the conveyance of goods or passenger traffic (for there was none), but for the conveyance of German troops from Cologne and other places to north-east France through Belgium and Luxemburg. The plans of the German General Staff were admirably conceived. One observer compared the advance of the invading army to a human tidal wave spreading through the valley of the Meuse. True, there were one or two small hitches. It was clear from the stories told by the prisoners taken by the Belgians at Liège that the German commissariat was unexpectedly defective. Again, insufficient preparations had been made for besieging Liège itself, and it was not for some days that it was found possible to bring up the great siege guns which should have been there from the very beginning. These faults, however, were not the result of

negligence so much as of conceit and of too great a belief in the invulnerability of the German arms. According to a message quoted in the present volume, the Kaiser waved his hand through the air and said: "I will go through Belgium like that." He did not; and the delay consequent upon the stubborn defence of Liège interfered with the German plans at the outset and gave the French time to complete their mobilisation. The effects of this delay are, indeed, incalculable, especially in view of the unexpected rapidity of the Russian mobilisation, and General Rennenkaempf's advance through East Prussia. Still, once the Germans realised that they had to meet resistance in Belgium it must be acknowledged that they took immediate steps to break it down. Large siege guns were hurried to the front, with the result, so far as can be ascertained from the meagre news which is allowed to pass the Censors on both sides of the Channel, that four of the strongest forts at Namur fell after a

three days' siege. Nothing, at first, seemed to be able to stop, or even to check, the advance of 2,000,000 Teutons.

Although only a few details have been allowed to leak out, the admitted facts all go to show that the German onslaught on France through Belgium has been successful, but delayed. It is said that the invaders expected to be in Paris within two weeks of crossing the frontier, after which they expected to be able to turn the bulk of their mighty army towards Russia before the Tsar's forces could be properly mobilised—before, at any rate, they could take the field and begin their advance into East Prussia. To this extent the plan has miscarried, thanks to the gallant resistance of Liège. Unless the Germans were in full possession of the railways at Liège and Namur an entry into France would have been dangerous, since the free passage of reinforcements could not be guaranteed. As it was, the Russians were in possession of Eydkuhnen before the Germans were in

possession of Liège; and the German advance on Namur coincided in point of time with the Russian advance on Insterburg.

While the German plans have miscarried to this extent, it would be foolish not to realise that they have succeeded in other respects. A glance at the map will show this; for if the official communiqués tell us little else they tell us, at least, what the approximate position of the armies was at given dates. On August 15th and 16th, for instance, and even, we may assume, on the 17th, the German army stretched in an irregular line from Maastricht to Alt Breisach, through Huy, Arlon, Longwy, and Metz. The southern portion of it, composed chiefly of Bavarians, lay from Château Salins to Strassburg, and thence to the end of the long line in the neighbourhood of Alt Breisach. The French army lay opposite in a nearly parallel line. French regiments had reached and reinforced the Belgian lines at Malines and Louvain, and

the main body of the French army was spread out along a front of nearly three hundred miles from Tirlemont to Mülhausen, via Namur, Mézières, Verdun, Sarreburg, Cirey, and Colmar.

As the Germans had opened their southern campaign by invading French territory at Cirey and Longwy, the position of the French army at this time makes it clear that General Joffre had taken the offensive. The Germans had been driven back over their original lines; Alsace had been invaded by the French; Altkirch and Mülhausen had been captured, and even Strassburg was menaced. This right wing of the French forces—the wing which had been thrust forward into Alsace—was based, of course, on the impregnable fortresses of Belfort and Epinal. As the subsequent developments showed, this invasion of Alsace was a strategic error, and this was acknowledged almost in so many words before a week had passed.

Why, at this early stage, a forward

move was made in this direction was never explained. There were critics who not unreasonably called it "fancy work." Certainly, it was to be expected that the Germans would advance from their southern base of Strassburg, and their central base of Metz; but the really serious work of the campaign, as everybody expected, was to be in the north-east. The advance into Alsace gave General Joffre an opportunity of issuing a proclamation to the Alsatians which, in view of their treatment by the Germans for more than a generation, naturally rejoiced them. But it was an advance which had to be paid for in another direction, when the main body of the German army began to make its way across the Upper Meuse.

If the position of the German troops has been traced as indicated, the line will be almost straight, except towards the south, where the Germans have had to give way before the French in Alsace. A day or two later, however, the line will be anything

but straight. By the 20th, although there is still fighting at Liège, and Brussels has not yet been occupied, there is a distinct German advance towards the north-west. The invaders have pushed on to Malines and Louvain, and, in the centre, they menace Namur. They have also brought up large forces to Givet, Dinant, and Sedan. They are cut down by the thousand; their dead fill the trenches; the defenders wonder how the officers can possibly induce their men to advance in such close formation, since they are certain to be annihilated. There is a reason, nevertheless, and a good one; for the time being there is no limit to the number of men who can be brought forward to take the places of those that fall. The result is a slow German advance, and everywhere the Allies, though stubbornly contesting every inch of the ground, slowly retire.

By the 22nd there is a further decided change. Brussels has been occupied, and the German forces are converging on

Charleroi in, so far as we know, six or seven parallel columns. From Enghien, from Hal, from Nivelles, from La Hulpe, from Wavre, and from Jodoigne, the Kaiser's troops make their way into the country lying between Namur and Mons. We do not know, at this time, precisely where the British troops are, nor are we at liberty to guess the strength of the French in this district. We are soon to know, however. A battle rages for three or four days at Charleroi; the French retire in good order; and two thousand British casualties are reported. Our troops and the French troops have behaved with the utmost gallantry; but, so far as we can ascertain, they have been outnumbered by two to one—perhaps in an even greater proportion. Set the minute hand of a clock at eleven, and the hour hand at five. That will, roughly, indicate the position of the German army (with the Belgian, British, and French troops in an almost parallel line) about August 17th to

19th. Then bend the minute hand of the clock to nine. That will convey a correct impression of the broad sweep made by the northern wing of the German army within four or five days; and it must be acknowledged, unfortunately, that it swept the Allies in front of it.

The result of the first stages of the Charleroi fighting made one or two things evident. In the first place, it was then known that the strength of the opposing German armies had been considerably under-estimated; they had succeeded in bringing up very strong reinforcements, with field guns and adequate munitions, through Liège. Secondly, it was seen that the French had not advanced northwards in sufficiently strong force. General Joffre had concentrated on Alsace and the Ardennes, rather than on the Namur front. The official statement published in Paris shows the French position at the commencement of the battle:

An army starting from Northern Woevre and

proceeding towards Neufchateau is attacking the German forces which have marched through the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg on the right bank of the Semois, and are going in a westerly direction.

Another army, which had started from the region of Sedan, is crossing the Ardennes, and is attacking the German forces which are marching between the Lesse and the Meuse.

A third army, from the region of Chimay, has begun an attack on the German right between the Sambre and the Meuse. This army is supported by the English army, proceeding from the Mons region.

In this statement, as Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett remarked at the time, several very important facts stood forth clearly :

(1) The French armies had never held the line of the Meuse and of the Sambre in any strength.

(2) The German armies, before the commencement of the fighting at Charleroi, were in possession of the country contained within the triangle, of which Namur is the apex, between the Sambre and the Meuse.

(3) Before some of its forts fell, Namur must have been entirely isolated, and attacked not only from the north but also from the south; and the French armies were not in a position to reinforce the garrison unless they sent forward some detachments before the Germans crossed the Sambre.

(4) In the fighting between August 18th and 22nd or 23rd it was the French armies who attacked and not the German—except in the neighbourhood of Mons.

Reference has been made to the triangle of which Namur is the apex. This, it was generally believed by the military critics, was the angle which the French were ready to occupy, if they had not, indeed, already occupied it, before the fighting at Charleroi began. The discovery that this triangle was really in possession of the Germans came as a shock. Exaggerated hopes gave way to exaggerated

fears; and it was even held that the Germans had a reasonable chance of breaking through the French lines in the north and advancing on Paris before the Russians could advance much further into Germany.

It is to be presumed that these fears are exaggerated, and that General Joffre can shift his men from Alsace to the north. One gathered that eighteen German army corps had advanced through Belgium, and that only three or four had been left to watch over Alsace-Lorraine. It would be unwise to hazard any conjecture as to the strength of the French; but if it were said that the proportions were just the reverse the statement might not be far out. At any rate, the fact remains that at the time of writing the French advance has been entirely checked; and the Allies are now on the defensive. If General Joffre had chosen to remain on the defensive from the first instead of advancing into Alsace; or, on the other hand, if he had considerably strengthened his force

in the north and advanced in that direction with the object of establishing himself at Namur, the position would have been totally different. The numbers of the opposing forces would, at least, have been better proportioned, and the "human tidal wave" could have been held back.

There is, of course, another side to the story. Although the Allies had to retire, the retirement was carried out in good order. German prisoners bore flattering testimony to the accuracy of the British firing, and it was admitted that the invaders had lost very heavily—so heavily, in fact, that they could not proceed with their advance for a day or two. Furthermore, there was no particular reason why, at this stage, the Allies should have wished to assume the offensive at all. They were not driven out of their original defensive positions; they merely failed, by their forward movement, to dislodge the Germans, who were greatly superior to them in numbers. The net result of the fighting

was that the Allies had simply to abandon their offensive—an offensive which does not appear to have been included in their original plans. In the official statement already quoted there was a passage saying : " On the orders of General Joffre our troops and the British troops took up positions on the covering line, which they would not have left had not the admirable Belgian effort enabled them to enter Belgium." Commenting on this, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett said :

The only deduction one can draw from this is that these operations were never included in the pre-arranged plan of campaign, and that they were only undertaken on the supposition that Namur, isolated and surrounded by the enemy, would be able to offer the same prolonged resistance as Liège, which would give the Allies time to advance in strength and occupy the triangle formed by the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse. The unexpected fall of this fortress at the very apex has now forced General Joffre to fall back on his original line of defence along the French frontier.

As will be seen from telegrams quoted

in the course of the following pages, German cavalrymen made a series of raids through northern Belgium, and took possession of Ghent and Bruges, even penetrating as far as Ostend. These raids, similar to many others in the central and southern parts of the country, were carried out—the Germans admitted it officially—with the aim of terrorising the civilian population. It appears to be a German belief—quite erroneous!—that when the civilian population is terrified by raids of this nature it brings pressure to bear on the Government to "stop the war." On August 26th, in order to check further German advances of this kind along the coast, a large force of British marines took possession of Ostend.

As moral effects count for as much in war as the effects of accurate marksmanship or the "pounding" of siege guns, it should be stated that the Belgian resistance did more than delay the German advance. It had an effect which, in this

war, was of even greater importance. For forty years all Europe had been brought up to believe in the invulnerability of the German army. The mere threat of German intervention was enough to turn the scales in favour of any proposals which were being urged by German diplomats. It almost became an accepted axiom of diplomacy and war that the Germans would always win and that their opponents would always lose. Certainly the Germans, and above all the Prussians, lost no opportunity of impressing this fact upon the world at large. To a supreme belief in themselves they added a disdainful arrogance of the rest of mankind which was, for an extraordinarily long period, found effective and impressive.

The atmosphere which this attitude brought about, the atmosphere of terror which had enveloped Europe for so many years, was swept away, once and for all, by the Belgian army at Liège. Such was

the awesome feeling inspired by the mere name of Germany that we should have hardly been surprised to see the Belgians turn tail and throw down their arms without firing a shot. What did happen we all know. The forts, which the Germans expected to capture in a few hours, were still holding out after twelve days. In the field, small forces of Belgians time and again cut up forces of Germans outnumbering them by three or four to one. In some outpost engagements, on a scale which would have entitled them to be called battles a century or so ago, the invaders were beaten back time after time —cavalry, infantry, and artillery were equally ineffective against the Belgian arms. It was only by sheer weight of numbers that the Belgians were forced back into Antwerp, and even then they preserved their ranks intact and were ready, after a few days' rest, for a further onslaught.

The importance of this great moral

change should be emphasised. The German army will never again represent invulnerability; it will stand rather for pure savagery. Reference has already been made to the raids undertaken by German cavalry for the purpose of terrorising the civilian population. As the telegrams in this volume will show, intimidation did not stop at mere raids, fuss, and noise. Inoffensive civilians were shot on the slightest provocation; houses were looted; villages burned; women and even young girls outraged; boys battered to death with the butts of rifles—and all this was done, not because the men got out of hand and "saw red"; but systematically, because the invaders wished to terrorise the civil population. When this statement was first made it seemed incredible—the methods of the Huns or the Tartars in the twentieth century. Some refutation, some attempt at refutation, from the German side was awaited. It did not come. Instead there came an admission

of the truth of the allegations which had been accumulating for several days.

After the outbreak of war it was customary for the German "wireless" stations to send out war "news" at Nauen or Norddeich. This was picked up by the Marconi Company and given out to the English Press. The "news" was usually exaggerated and in many cases utterly mendacious. But hidden away at the end of a batch of these messages which reached London on August 27th was to be found an appalling paragraph, which, in the course of a very few lines, admitted publicly and officially the terrible charges of barbaric savagery that during the preceding days had compelled the Belgian Government to appeal to the judgment of the civilised world.

Special stress must be laid on the official character of this confession, because it is notorious that nothing can be transmitted from the German wireless stations under war conditions without the express

sanction and approval of the Berlin Government.

The statement in question is as follows :

The distribution of arms and ammunition among the civil population of Belgium had been carried out on systematic lines, and the authorities enraged the public against Germany by assiduously circulating false reports. They were under the impression that, with the aid of the French, they would be able to drive the Germans out of Belgium in two days. The only means of preventing surprise attacks from the civil population has been to interfere with unrelenting severity and to create examples, which by their "frightfulness" would be a warning to the whole country. The increased war contribution levied on the Province of Liège has also had an excellent effect.

Could a confession be more frank or candid ? Could any statement nerve us, as we have never been nerved before, to resist the menace of Prussian militarism to the uttermost ?

CHAPTER I

Outbreak of War — Invasion of Belgium and Luxemburg—The First Fighting at Liège

In the first volume of this series, "How the War Began," the causes leading up to the great conflict were dealt with in detail. It may be briefly recalled that on Thursday, July 23rd, the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum was sent to Servia, the Belgrade authorities being allowed only forty-eight hours in which to reply. The next day saw the holding of a Cabinet Council in Russia. On July 25th the Austrian Minister left Belgrade because the reply handed to him by the Servian Cabinet was deemed unsatisfactory. Sir Edward Grey, on Monday, July 27th, announced his plan for a "Four-Power Conference"—Germany, France, Italy, and ourselves—a plan which had to be abandoned owing to the hostility of Germany. On July 28th, Austria-Hungary declared war on Servia; a partial Russian mobilisation

was ordered on the 30th ; Germany mobilised on the 31st.

It became evident at once that it was the aim of the German General Staff to cripple the French army immediately, so that the German soldiers, who were concentrated on the French and Belgium frontiers, could be hurried back to East Prussia to meet the Russian forces later on. Before any definite declaration of war had been made, indeed, either against France or Russia, German patrols invaded French territory on the night of July 31st, seized several locomotives, and cut the telegraph and telephone wires. This may be regarded as the first act of war, though the French outposts were withdrawn in order that they might not come into actual conflict with the invaders just then.

So serious had the international situation become, that the smaller countries began to make preparations lest their territory should be violated. On Friday, July 31st, the Belgian Government ordered a partial, and the Dutch Government, a complete mobilisation ; and before the week-end had passed practically all Belgium was in arms. The Stavelot-Malmedy route near the German frontier was strengthened by advance cavalry outposts ; dirigibles were got in readiness ; the

Meuse strongholds were fully garrisoned, and barbed wire fences were erected everywhere. On August 2nd, without having yet declared war, Germany invaded the independent state of Luxemburg, the neutrality of which had been guaranteed by the Treaty of London of 1867, by Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, France, Prussia, Russia, Italy, Holland, and Belgium.

The German soldiers arrived at the station of Luxemburg during the night, seized the station and the Government offices, and held the bridges on the Trèves and Trois Vierges lines, so as to ensure the passage of military trains across the Grand Duchy. The Grand Duchess was rudely treated by the German officers, and imprisoned in her palace; and the invaders positively refused to withdraw. It was admitted a day or two afterwards by the Imperial Chancellor, speaking in the Reichstag, that the violation of neutral territory was wrong, but that the Germans were determined, in his now famous phrase, to "hack their way through."

At the same time the German army penetrated French territory at two points, namely, Longwy and Cirey-les-Forges.

It was stated on August 2nd that the number of Germans who had crossed the Grand Duchy

was about 100,000, and that they were concentrating in Belgian territory in the neighbourhood of Liège. Strong guards were posted round the railway lines. On Sunday, too, a despatch from Luxemburg announced that the Luxemburg Minister of State had received, through the German Minister there, a telegram from the Imperial Chancellor stating that the military measures taken by the Germans in Luxemburg did not constitute a hostile act against the Grand Duchy. They were simply measures taken to protect the working of the railways connected with the German system against a possible attack by French troops. Luxemburg would be completely indemnified for any damage that might be done to the lines.

Although Germany formally declared war on Russia on July 31st, no great military efforts were made in the east. On the other hand, the movements already made against France were followed up with energy, in spite of the fact that diplomatic relations had not actually been severed. What the next German step was may be seen from the following brief statement, which was made by Sir Edward Grey in the House of Commons on the evening of August 3rd :

Germany sent yesterday evening at seven o'clock

ALEXANDER GROSS F.R.G.S.

LONDON
BOULOGNE
ENGLISH CHANNEL
ROUEN

a Note proposing to Belgium friendly neutrality covering a free passage through Belgian territory, and promising the maintenance of the independence of the kingdom and possessions at the conclusion of peace, and threatening in the case of refusal to treat Belgium as an enemy.

A time limit of twelve hours was fixed for reply.

Belgium answered that an attack on their neutrality would be a flagrant violation of the rights of nations and that to accept the German proposal would sacrifice the honour of a nation conscious of its duty. Belgium is firmly resolved to repel aggression by all possible means.

King George at once signed the Proclamation ordering the mobilisation of the entire British army and embodying the Territorials. This cynical disregard of a Treaty to which Germany had affixed her signature could be redressed in only one way. While the British Expeditionary Force was being prepared, however, the Germans were making haste to secure their positions in Belgium and on the French frontier, and their movements were reported from the outset by the special correspondents of *The Daily Telegraph*. On August 4th, by order of the Belgian General

Staff, the railway bridges at Lavaux and Bastogne were destroyed, so as to delay the Germans if they advanced through Luxemburg: everywhere the conditions in Belgium were those of war. Civilians in all directions took refuge in the towns, and the roads were blocked by wagons and ploughs. On the Luxemburg frontier many German patrols and posts were seen. The Germans occupied the whole of the province, with the object of facilitating the concentration of their army.

A correspondent, returning from Longwy, the great natural fortress which forms the advance guard of the French covering troops, found it necessary, owing to military obstacles, to perform some part of the journey on foot. The roads were barred by sentries and posts at all points. The officers of the garrison asked him to assure the English that the morale of the army was superb. Certainly, the correspondent added, he had never seen French soldiers so calm, cool, and confident.

On the same day the Germans entered Belgium at three points—Dolhain, Francorchamps, and Stavelot; and other forces advanced from Luxemburg in the direction of Longwy, Villerupt, and Thionville. In the evening Belgium was

declared to be in a state of war with Germany. The German raids, following upon the insolent demand that German troops should be allowed to march through the country, had caused an intense feeling of indignation throughout Belgium.

At the Brussels recruiting station men of all ages literally fought to enlist and get rifles. There was wild patriotic enthusiasm and no sign of fear.

At an extraordinary sitting of Parliament many members appeared in military uniform, ready to start for the front.

The King delivered the following speech to the deputies :

Never since 1830 has a graver hour sounded for Belgium. The strength of our right and the need of Europe for our autonomous existence make us still hope that the dreaded events will not occur. If it is necessary for us to resist an invasion of our soil, however, that duty will find us armed and ready to make the greatest sacrifices. Our young men have already come forward to defend the Fatherland in danger.

One duty alone is imposed upon us, namely, the maintenance of a stubborn resistance, courage, and union. Our bravery is proved by our faultless

mobilisation and by the multitude of voluntary engagements. This is the moment for action. I have called you together to-day in order to allow the Chambers to participate in the enthusiasm of the country. You will know how to adopt with urgency all necessary measures. Are you decided to maintain inviolate the sacred patrimony of our ancestors ?

No one will fail in his duty, and the army is capable of performing its task. The Government and I are fully confident. The Government is aware of its responsibilities, and will carry them out to the end to guard the supreme welfare of the country. If a stranger should violate our territory he will find all the Belgians gathered round their Sovereign, who will never betray his constitutional oath. I have faith in our destinies. A country which defends itself wins the respect of everyone, and cannot perish.

God will be with us.

Deafening cheers welcomed the announcement that M. Vandervelde, the leader of the Socialists, had been nominated as Minister of State, to show that men of all parties were now united for the defence of the flag. The King's speech, appealing to the devotion of the whole nation, and expressing confidence in the fate of a neutral and peaceful

country which had been so unlawfully attacked, caused an indescribable outburst of loyal and brave assent. All bills regulating a moratorium and the recall of more army drafts were voted without a minute's discussion.

While the King and Queen left the Palace amid wonderful ovations, emotion increased when the Premier, M. de Broqueville, announced that Belgian territory had already been invaded by Germans, and when he read the recent Germano-Belgian diplomatic notes, threatening Belgium with Germany's dire vengeance for defending her neutrality.

The King started for the front at once.

On August 5th, Dr. E. J. Dillon, one of *The Daily Telegraph's* special correspondents, wired:

I received information this morning that British troops had landed and were on their way to the frontier to defend Belgian neutrality. I at once drove out to Laeken, through which suburb they must pass. There I learned that the news was premature. French regiments are alleged to have arrived at Namur. Others are marching into Belgium. It is reported here that the German troops, when entering Belgian territory, were fired upon from houses in Visé, whereupon they decimated the population, sparing neither age nor sex.

All these reports must be received with circumspection. I myself, however, have witnessed scenes of poignant grief, the actors in which were relatives of the people in Visé, who had heard the narrative and believed it. The authorities naturally keep such things dark in order not to frighten the population, which is incensed against the Germans.

Belgium is beset with German spies, who even now continue their work, with marvellous deliberation and courage. Wireless telegraphic apparatus is alleged by the authorities to be still employed by the German agents, some of whom have been arrested. The population of both Brussels and Antwerp are excited against the Germans. The authorities are now effectually protecting the shops. Twenty-five thousand Germans, many occupying influential positions, reside in Antwerp, and the public desires their expulsion in the interests of defence. Belgians have been expelled from Germany and forbidden during the railway journey to look out of the windows or speak any language but German.

This morning a German eagle-shaped aeroplane was hovering over Liège city. A Belgian aviator rose higher, and descended heavily upon the German craft, cutting it in two. The Belgian is said to be but slightly wounded. As his name is not given the narrative is open to doubt.

An eye-witness of the combat at Visé affirms that a squadron of Prussian cavalry moved towards Visé

Bridge, in which the Belgians had made a breach sixty mètres wide. The Belgians, hidden among the broken piers, opened a cross-fire, almost annihilating them. At the same time shots were fired from the houses on the right bank of Visé, which was already occupied by the Germans. It was then that the indiscriminate massacre of the inhabitants by the German soldiers began. They also fired upon the Red Cross ambulance.

The latest news received from the front on the same day stated that under the protection of the long range guns of the fortress of Liège the Belgian troops were putting up a fine defence against the German invaders. They inflicted great losses on the enemy, whose attempts to cross the River Meuse by means of a pontoon bridge had failed. This, it was stated, would compel the Germans to cross the Meuse on foot at the Dutch frontier. The attitude of the Dutch towards them was not yet known.

Official news received at Brussels stated that a fierce fight had occurred at Liège. The present situation was understood to be very favourable for the Belgians, who had victoriously repulsed all the German attacks. The Germans, who endeavoured to pass through the spaces between the forts, were driven back by a mixed brigade.

It was said that not a single one who passed the intervals returned. The German shells were unable to pierce the defences. German aeroplanes showed themselves much inferior to the Belgian. None of the Belgian aeroplanes sustained any accident, but several of the German did so.

It was confirmed that the Germans behaved disgracefully at Visé. They shot many civilians, expelling the remainder of the inhabitants and giving the town to the flames.

The *Rotterdamsche Courant* in a leading article said that Holland had read with satisfaction Sir Edward Grey's statement that it was obligatory on the Great Powers to maintain the neutrality of the Netherlands, Belgium, and Denmark. Holland also observed with satisfaction that Germany was avoiding the Dutch frontier.

The engagement referred to above was generally known as the first battle of Liège. Subsequent particulars of it showed that the Belgian forces captured seven guns, and that 8,000 of the invaders were killed and wounded. On Wednesday, August 5th, in an encounter between the Vesdre and the Meuse Rivers a single Belgian squadron annihilated six German squadrons. The Seventh German Corps suffered enormous

loss, 800 prisoners being brought into Brussels. The encounter began in the early morning, and lasted till five in the afternoon.

Germans, with the Seventh Army Corps supported by a large mass of cavalry, began a violent attack against the south-eastern section of the Liège stronghold, not engaging the forts with their artillery, but trying to reach the interior of the stronghold through the intervals.

The ground was mined in several places, and all the battalions were destroyed. The German loss was enormous. That of the Belgians was very much less.

Early on Wednesday morning, by force of numbers, the German advance guard succeeded in entering Liège. Fighting went on in the street for a time.

In view of the strength of the fortifications at Liège, the strategic position of the town, and the fact that the main body of the Belgian army was concentrated there, it became evident that the invaders could not advance without either "containing" Liège—*i.e.*, surrounding the place with a large body of troops, and, as it were, imprisoning the garrison without making any attempt at capture—or reducing the fortresses to such an extent as to drive the main body of the

Belgian army before it. The latter plan was adopted and was eventually successful; but not before the heroic garrison, though greatly outnumbered, had succeeded in delaying the German advance for nine or ten days. As time was an essential factor in the German programme, it is difficult for us to over-estimate the advantage which thus accrued to the defenders of Western Europe.

The town of Liège stands on the Meuse, close to the point where the hills on its left bank come to an end, and near the spot where the valleys of the Vesdre and Ourthe on the other side afford routes for roads and railways, east to Verviers and southwards towards the Ardennes. The main stream divides the far-extending city into an older town, wherein is situated the citadel and most of the public buildings, and a newer suburb containing the manufacturing establishments and dwellings of the artisans. The most noteworthy buildings are the magnificent church of St. Jacques, dating from the eleventh century, the handsome Académie des Beaux Arts, the Theatre Royal, built upon the model of the Odéon at Paris, the Palais de Justice, and Town Hall. Liège owes much of its prosperity to the fact

that it is the centre of a rich coal district, some of the mines actually extending under the houses and streets.

Iron industries and coal increased its population from 113,000 in 1873 to 169,000 in 1910. The iron manufacturers are chiefly concerned with the production of cannon and those implements of war for which the adjoining township of Seraing is especially famous. The textile industry also employs thousands of workers, while paper, oil, tobacco, leather, gold and silver ware, bicycles, watches, and light machinery of all kinds are manufactured in the busy quarters. Known to the Germans as Lüttich, the city is the capital of the Walloons, a race who have been described as "marked by an indefatigable industry and a fierce and implacable spirit of hostility towards those who have attempted to infringe their privileges." Since its foundation the town has been the scene of endless fighting. Charles of Burgundy sacked it in 1468, and put thousands of its brave inhabitants to death. It was stormed by Maximillian I. in 1649; three times by the French between 1675 and 1691; and was captured by Marlborough in 1702. In the wars of 1792–94 French and Austrians fought repeatedly for its

possession, the height of Robermont outside the defences being the spot where the Prince of Coburg was defeated by Marshal Jourdan on September 19th, 1794, in the last battle fought by the Austrians on Belgian soil. The citadel, 500 feet above the sea level, whence the approach of the Germans was anxiously watched, commands a view over the whole of the city and the populous and industrious valleys of the Meuse, while in the South can be seen from its summit the peaks of the Ardennes and northward the Petersburg near Maastricht and the broad plains of Limburg.

Hardly had the siege begun in earnest when a small body of Uhlans, who had been directed by spies to the headquarters of General Leman, the Belgian commander, made a determined attempt to assassinate him by forcing their way into his office and shooting at him with revolvers. One of the General's brother officers lifted him up bodily, carried him to the yard at the back of the house, and dropped him over the wall into the yard alongside. This promptness, in the momentary confusion, was believed to have saved General Leman's life. Two Belgian gendarmes and an officer were killed; but the other Belgians present shot dead the Uhlans who had

made the daring raid. There were eight of them in all—two officers and six men.

In a despatch sent off in the evening of August 6th Dr. E. J. Dillon briefly summed up the early fighting. The invading army, he stated, at first expected a mere nominal resistance. Disappointed, they despatched forces to the north and south-east of Liège, where are the forts of Barchon, north of Evegnée, of Fléron and Chaudfontaine to the east, and of Embourg and Boncelles to the south. The attacks proceeded at various points along this front.

The position at Liège was defended by forts and also by field works, trenches, barbed-wire entanglement, and mines, with artillery served by mobile troops, under improvised cover, who occupied the spaces between the forts, but hidden behind them so that the Germans who endeavoured to pass through these spaces in order to surround the forts were unable to determine the position of the field works and direct their artillery fire against them. This piece of strategy proved fatal to the enemy's troops, who were exposed to artillery fire from the forts, and cut down piecemeal by the defenders within the spaces. The country was favourable to the invaders, owing to the ravines, woods, and winding roads,

which enabled them to advance under natural cover. Despite this advantage, the Belgians, who displayed genuine heroism, drove them back with slaughter, but not without themselves making heavy sacrifices, which they did with a degree of valour that commanded universal admiration. The Russian Tsar sent his hearty congratulations.

During the night of Wednesday—Thursday, a tremendous assault was undertaken by the Germans, in which the entire Seventh Army Corps took part. The Belgians manfully held their positions, while the whole country around, illumined by dazzling searchlights, quaked as if shaken by a seismic convulsion. The grey light of morning revealed hundreds of German corpses and also the advance of the German forces against Fort Barchon. The Belgians having formed a mixed brigade of two regiments, proceeded to effect a daring counter-attack from the heights of Wandre. Their advance was as irresistible as an oceanic tide. The Germans stood a few minutes awaiting the onset, and then fled panic-stricken. The Seventh Corps was broken, and a few hours later 5,000 fugitives passed by Maastricht, where they were received, fed, and, curiously enough, sent to Aix-la-Chapelle.

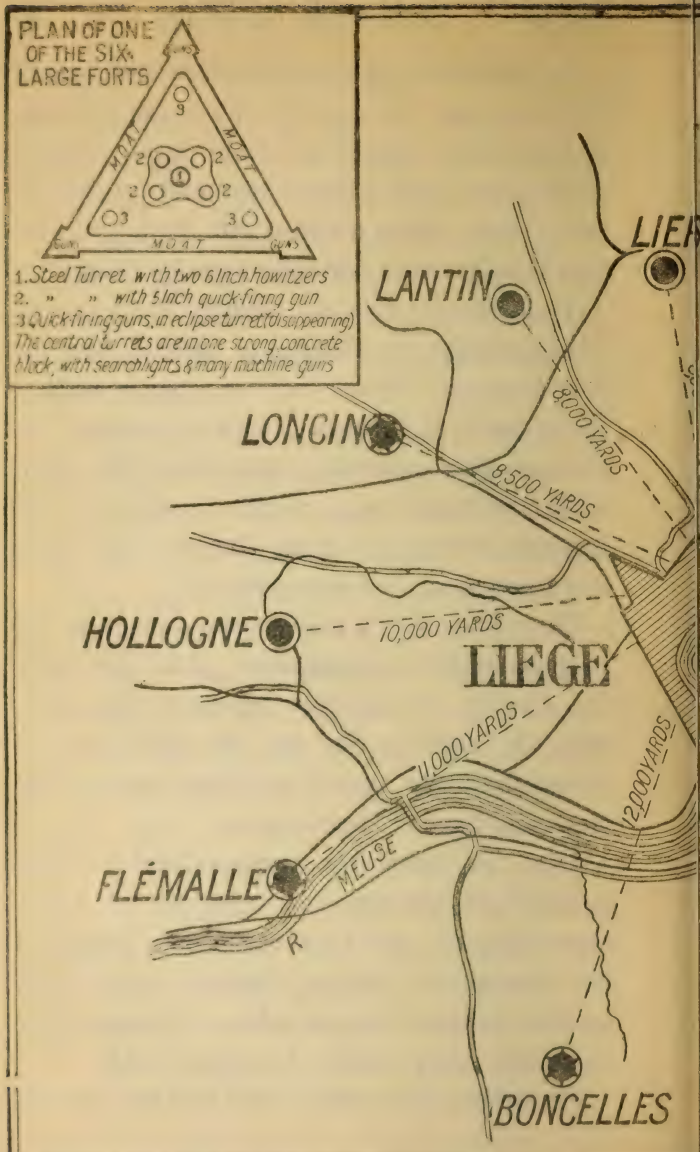
On the south the spaces between the forts of Embourg were the objective of a resolute attack. The invaders advancing within three hundred yards of the Garde Civique were first deprived of their colonel, whom a soldier shot dead, and were then literally mown down like grass by the scythe.

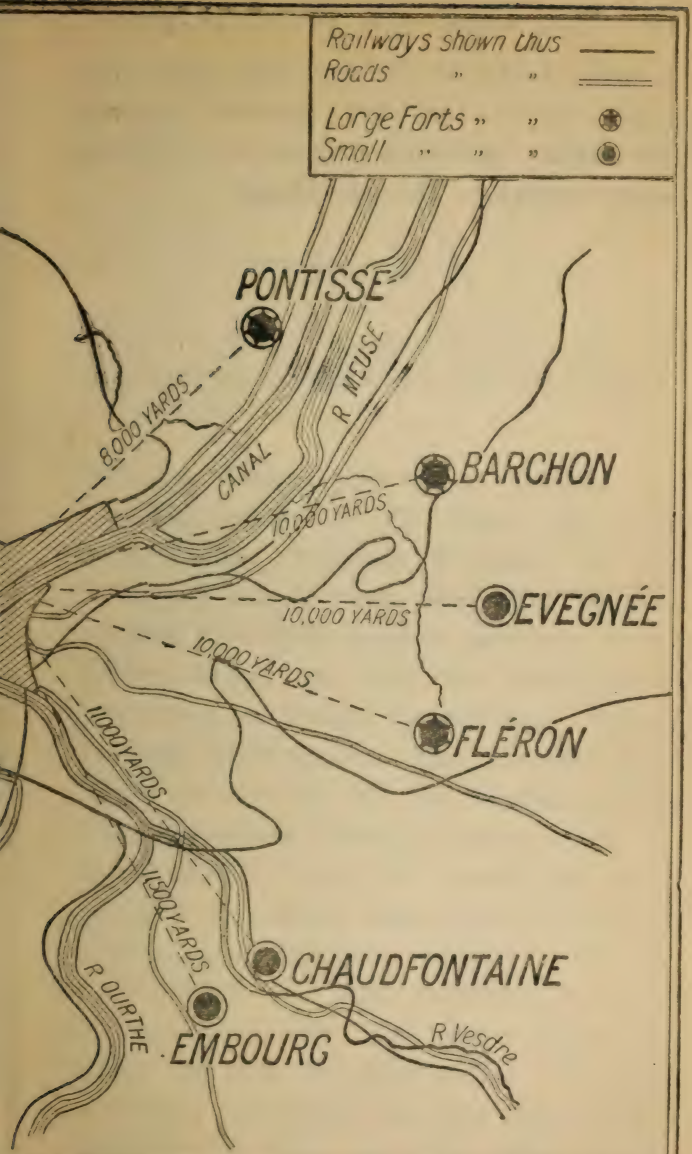
Meanwhile the German artillery fire was concentrated upon the Château of Langres, opposite Fort Embourg. Under cover of a heavy artillery fire a body of German troops surrounded the Château when suddenly a grey cloud with flame arose, followed by a terrific explosion. The Belgians having mined the Château had blown it up, and many Germans with it.

The upshot of this brilliant stand made by the Belgians was the maintenance of all the forts, the capture of numerous prisoners and seven guns, the death of 800 and the disablement of thousands of the enemy, and the defeat of the two crack corps of Brandenburg.

After this defeat the Germans sent a parlementaire to demand the surrender of Liège, threatening an attack by a Zeppelin airship as the alternative. General Leman's refusal was speedily followed by an advance executed by the Tenth Army Corps. It was repulsed.

The Belgian War Office stated that the German





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invaders, having already lost about 25,000 men, killed, wounded, or taken prisoners, requested the Belgian authorities to grant a twenty-four hours' armistice. This was refused.

CHAPTER II

French join Belgians—Details of the Battles—German Spy System—Raids by Uhlans

French outposts effected a junction with the Belgians on the 7th. Before they could offer effective assistance, however, the first battle had already taken place. The Germans, profiting from their previous experience of the Belgian forces, had this time taken greater precautions and brought up more men. A *Daily Telegraph* correspondent said that he could clearly see from the hill the Germans in little boats and others building a pontoon over the Meuse south of Visé. The horses were swum across. The crossing was carried out in half a dozen places with great regularity. The Germans did not seem much concerned at the fire of the Belgian forts. The Belgian troops were spread out over the rising ground. Fire from a German mitrailleuse kept the Belgians at a distance, and slowly the whole hillside became

covered with German soldiers, who drove the Belgians before them.

Near Visé an automobile arrived with five Belgian civilian guards. They alighted from the car and advanced on foot. A German patrol called on them to halt, and instantly the Belgians fled. Four escaped; one fell wounded. As they passed him the Germans said that when they came back they would kill him.

By five o'clock a large force of Germans had crossed the Meuse and commenced to march south on Liège. The Belgians tried to harass the Germans by firing into the progressing columns. At last the Belgians ceased firing and retired. From the houses along the road the people took to flight in despair.

In the village of Eben people were calm, looking with astonishment at the tremendous body of troops passing along the route. They were not molested at all as the Germans progressed towards Liège along both banks of the Meuse.

With characteristic optimism Germans said: "In two days we will have Liège, and within a week we will be before Paris." The Germans did not seem to have any idea, in fact, that in front of Liège they might have an encounter with the French Army.

An incident was reported which showed how little the German soldier knew about the war in which he was engaged. Amongst the wounded in Maastricht was a young German of eighteen who believed that he had been fighting the French. Great was his surprise when he was told he had been fighting the Belgians. "The Belgians!" he said, "but we have no quarrel with the Belgians!" He was under the impression that he had a French bullet in him.

Already the advance guard was fighting near Liège, and the Germans agreed that they had lost heavily. They said, "Cost what it may, we will take Liège." Fort Pontisse, near Liège, was heavily attacked.

Some of the wounded Germans received bullets in the back in the encounter at Visé. It was believed that, by mistake, one body of Germans fired into another. Twenty-six were killed and wounded. Small wonder that the feelings of the people were filled with anguish at Maastricht, as at all hours of the day motor ambulances came in from the battlefield. The seriously wounded were brought to Maastricht, where there were surgeons. The less seriously wounded were taken to Eysden.

A Dutch lady with two children took to flight

from Visé on hearing that the Germans were approaching. She was stopped by a body of Germans, who compelled her to go with them to Visé and afterwards show where they could get provisions. Finally she was escorted to the frontier.

In a later telegram the same correspondent said :

I have just returned from the frontier village of Mesch, where I saw the most magnificent and impressive sight of a vast German army. From the hill on which I was standing I could see the German troops come up before me, artillery, cavalry, infantry, and all, while behind the hill I could hear the boom of gun fire.

As the Holsteiner Dragoons passed I could see on their colour the date 1871. Then I saw fifteen farmers with bent heads led forth as prisoners. Their crime was that they had defended their homes.

Then an aeroplane flies overhead. Is it German or Belgian? Will it drop bombs? It passes on. And then I am approached by German soldiers, who point revolvers at me, and order me to retire, for in my eagerness I had stepped beyond the Dutch frontier post.

In a still later message he writes :

The Belgians have destroyed several bridges on the light railway from Tongeren to Bilsen.

Several important despatches appeared on Monday, August 10th, giving particulars of the movements of troops during Saturday and Sunday. There were no movements by the Germans for three days. Beyond the range of the forts' fire they rested, recovering strength. The threatened attack along the river Ourthe was suspended. These facts, in the view of the Belgian General Staff, denoted insufficient preparations and showed that the German concentration had not been fully carried out. The situation, in their opinion, gave every assurance that merited punishment would follow the invasion.

Liège was invested by the Germans on Sunday night, but this was expected, and was regarded as unimportant. The forts were known to be ready for further and prolonged resistance, while the foe's stock of projectiles was evidently short. The Belgian field forces, apart from the Liège garrison, were massing in the right directions. The portion of Belgian Luxemburg invaded by the Germans was being cleared of them by the advancing French troops, who marched forward with the greatest speed and energy and got good assistance from a division of Belgian cavalry.

Many trains conveyed more French troops to the front via Brussels.

King Albert reviewed and congratulated the triumphant Third Division, which had been keeping the foe at bay at Liège.

Liège city possessed an old disused fortress, which the Belgians blew up to prevent the Germans from availing themselves of it.

It was reported, and afterwards confirmed, that many Bavarians were deserting or refusing service, the idea of fighting peaceful Belgium, whose Queen is a beloved Bavarian princess, being very unpopular.

A Belgian who passed through Rotterdam on Saturday evening said: "I left Liège on Saturday morning, and then the town was still defending itself valiantly. Not one of the forts was then in the hands of the Germans. An armistice of three hours was agreed upon to bury the dead, who lay all around."

The man, who was evidently highly wrought up after the terrible experience of the siege, declined to say more. The German prisoners captured had very few cartridges, from which it was assumed that the Germans had some difficulty in bringing up ammunition and supplies

How deadly a task the Germans had undertaken in rebuilding the bridge over the Meuse was illustrated by the following telegram sent by the *Rotterdamsche Courant's* correspondent at Maastricht on Saturday afternoon :

The pontoon bridge built by the Germans was shot away, so that further troops cannot cross. The 90th and 25th German Regiments, which supported the bridge-builders, were mown down by the quick-firing guns. A wounded Belgian was asked how the Germans had fared. He replied in one word, " Annihilated." Those of the wounded who can be transported by rail are to be brought from the hospitals at Maastricht to Alkmaar.

The gallant defence offered by the Belgian garrison was not to pass without suitable recognition. On August 7th, the French President, M. Poincaré, despatched the following telegram from the Elysée to the King of the Belgians :

I am happy to announce to your Majesty that the Government of the Republic has just decorated with the Legion of Honour the gallant town of Liège. It wishes thus to honour the courageous defenders of the place and the whole Belgian army, with which since this morning the French army has been shedding its blood on the battlefield.

In the view of a very high military authority,

the severe check inflicted by the Belgian garrison of Liège on the German VII. Army Corps was of cardinal importance. The German General Staff made no secret of the fact that they looked forward to an easy task in marching through Belgium. An officer in the German War Office recently stated that they counted on the benevolent neutrality of Belgium at worst; and, more probably, the King of the Belgians would range himself on the German side.

Some time ago a military mission, at the Kaiser's invitation, attended manœuvres of special importance near Berlin. In conversation with the senior British officer present the Kaiser said: "I shall sweep through Belgium thus"—and waved his arm in the air.

The authority alluded to expressed the opinion that the line of the Meuse could now be held, but that the crucial trial of strength would occur when the main bodies of the two field armies met in the open.

What was of no less interest, as showing the elaborate methods adopted by the Germans for years beforehand, was Dr. E. J. Dillon's account of the Germans in Belgium before and after the outbreak of war. Dr. Dillon telegraphed from Brussels on Sunday, August 9th;

It is a noteworthy fact that during the fierce fighting of the past few days a disproportionately large number of officers as compared with privates were disabled owing to their distinctive uniforms, and among the officers were a disproportionately large percentage of surgeons, whose uniform is still more conspicuous. The War Minister's attention is being drawn to the advisability of rendering the outward marks of rank differences less noticeable at a distance.

The Belgian Government has decided not to proceed to the expulsion of Germans en masse, although the country is infested by spies and agents, who make desperate efforts to reveal and frustrate the plans of the military authorities. In the German Consulate and the German school wireless telegraphy apparatus were discovered. At Antwerp, where the Germans had for years wielded paramount influence, many of them repaid the hospitality shown them with perfidious hostility.

Two sons of the principal German firm in Antwerp, which has been established for over twenty years there, have been arrested on a charge of treason. Even the School of Aviation had trusted a caretaker of German nationality, who has occupied this and similar posts for eighteen years, and was discovered on Friday working the wireless telegraph apparatus. He was arrested, tried, and condemned.

Nowhere in Belgium were the Germans more at

home than in Antwerp; nowhere have they proved such relentless enemies to their hosts. When quitting the city on Friday some of them exclaimed, "We are going now, but we will return shortly escorted by troops." The bitterness against Germany in Antwerp is intense, but there and throughout Belgium the German prisoners and wounded are treated with the utmost consideration.

The Germans, who were hospitably received in Holland, fed, and sent home, were not, as the Belgian Press believed, soldiers, but fugitive civilians. Holland has scrupulously discharged her duties as a neutral State.

The Flemish population of Belgium is making heroic sacrifices for the struggle, which has only been begun. The smiling suburbs of Antwerp, with their gardens, lawns, thickets, and luxurious villas, are being disfigured beyond recognition in order to meet the requirements of the military strategists, and the owners look on with grim approval at the destruction of their cherished property.

The narrative of how the neutrality of Luxemburg was violated is interesting. On Sunday morning while I was painfully travelling through Bavaria towards the Rhine the population of Luxemburg awakened to find all the ways of communication in German hands. Everywhere detachments of German soldiers were stationed, but what most astonished the simple-minded citizens was this—that the

detachments were commanded by the employés of commercial and industrial firms established in Luxemburg who two days previously had been at their offices as usual.

Now, attired in military uniform, they were at the head of bodies of German troops, leading them through the streets, directing them to places where perquisitions might be made or arrests effected, and giving them the benefit of their admirable knowledge of the town and people.

This they did with noteworthy results. Thus they denounced some 200 Alsatians who had not served in the German army, and who naturally reckoned on a safe asylum in neutral Luxemburg. These unfortunate men were roused from their sleep and spirited away, their appeal for humanitarian treatment being answered by violence or threats.

A German major who was first to cross the Adolf Bridge found his way barred by the Cabinet Minister M. Eyschen, who, having arrived in a motor, turned the car lengthwise across the bridge. Taking out a copy of the Berlin Treaty, he showed it to the German officer, who remarked, "I am acquainted with it, but have orders which I must execute." Immediately afterwards the Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide drove up in an automobile, which she also turned lengthwise across the bridge, saying that the neutrality of Luxemburg must be respected, and that she would

telegraph to the Kaiser, whereupon the major curtly answered, " You had better go home quietly."

The commander of the Luxemburg army, Vandyck, came up just then and remonstrated with the German officer, who retorted, " If these are not your methods they are ours," and, putting a revolver to his head, cried, " Clear out ! "

Soon afterwards the work of military destruction began, villas and farmhouses being demolished, and thickets cut down for strategic purposes. Terror reigns throughout Luxemburg since then. A farmer with provisions, being stopped and his wagons seized, grumbled. He was arrested, taken before a Court-martial, and has not been heard of since. From Luxemburg to Rodange the fields are devastated, houses razed to the ground, trenches dug, and whoever casts a glance at these is arrested as a spy. In a word, the population of the Grand Duchy is learning the meaning of the words " reign of terror."

Military experts here hold that some days must elapse before important aggressive operations are resumed by the German army. They explain the miscalculation of the invaders as follows :

Germany secretly moved forward about 900,000 men towards the Franco-Belgian and Russian frontiers during the week ending August 2nd, with the object of being able to surprise and overpower the resisting forces at the very outset of the war.

In order to accomplish this stroke, which would

have had an immense effect upon the morale of the troops, the men were despatched without adequate provisions or ammunition, on the assumption that they would find the former in the conquered districts, and could await the latter from their own trains of supplies, which would follow shortly afterwards. The reception at Liège upset this reckoning, and explains why the prisoners complained of hunger.

These unexpected reverses, which have given time for the junction of the French and Belgian forces, will now necessitate the definitive concentration of the German army, which includes the second line of another million men, and this operation is at present in full swing. It involves the mobilisation of the Landsturm, or Territorial army, and according to trustworthy private advices received here, the officer commanding the Cologne military district has already called all the men of the Landsturm to arms.

In other words, a tremendous effort will shortly be put forth to burst through the Franco-Belgian barriers of the forts and men, and inundate France with German soldiers.

In view of this mighty tide of armed men and the relatively narrow area through which they must force a passage, it is nowise impossible that they may at the last moment choose a route northwards of Visé, and violate Dutch territory. This eventuality should be borne well in mind by those interested in preparing for it.

One of the curious methods of warfare employed by the Germans is the despatch of Uhlans in groups of six and eight, who ride for miles in advance of the army, enter undefended towns and villages, announce the arrival of the bulk of the troops, and return. It is amazing how far ahead of the army they advance.

On Friday evening they entered Arlon, and were received in silence, but when leaving they heard the report of a revolver in the principal café. Then, turning sharply, they discharged their firearms at the house, and one rushed with pointed lance against a woman sitting at a window. She was wounded mortally.

The municipal authorities, fearing further reprisals, drove out in a motor, with a white flag, found the commanding officer, and tendered their excuses, promising to punish the person guilty of firing.

The organisation of the German espionage was elaborate beyond belief. Large German commercial firms established for many years in Belgium prospered under conditions which rendered competition by Belgians hopeless. They entertained intimate relations with all classes of the population, subscribed handsomely to local charities, wielded great influence in municipal affairs, and were conversant with everything which the German Government was concerned to know.

The secret of their prosperity was a munificent State subvention from the Berlin Government.

Each German subject who was in the secret service of the Government had his own work to execute. At Cambria, it is affirmed, a German firm was charged with the work of having the bridge blown up. A Belgian servant discovered and denounced the plot. The authorities shadowed a German merchant day and night, and when at last he drew near the bridge with the requisite explosives the sentinel rushed upon him with the bayonet.

The German military captain Erchard was arrested at Ostend on suspicion. On his person was found a sum of 4,000 francs and a written order, "Remain Ostend observant," also the key to a cipher with which he corresponded with the German staff. After his arrest a letter to him was intercepted from a Belgian offering him important information concerning the plans of national defence. The writer of the letter has also been apprehended. In the ancient synagogue of Antwerp, now used only as a magazine, 3,000 German rifles, carefully wrapped and packed in cases, have been discovered.

For a day or two the main interest shifted from Liège to Alsace, as on Sunday, August 9th, a French force advanced into Alsace and occupied Mülhausen. The men were greeted with unbounded enthusiasm by the inhabitants; but strategic considerations necessitated the evacuation of the town shortly afterwards. Another wing of the

French army, however, advanced at the same time into Belgium, and there were several cavalry encounters, of minor importance, on the banks of the Meuse.

Mr. Granville Fortescue, who, as the special representative of *The Daily Telegraph*, had spent the first two days of the siege in the city of Liège, caught the last train from the besieged city and sent his telegram dated Liège, August 6th, from Brussels. He said :

Last night and early this morning the Germans attacked this city in force. About 11.30 p.m., on hearing heavy cannonading, I crossed the river by the bridge Fragnée, and took position on the heights to the south of the city. It was full moon.

The German attack was directed against the forts at Fléron, Embourg, and Boncelles. The artillery practice was perfect. Shell after shell was exploded fairly on the ramparts of the forts. The return fire of the Belgians I could not judge for effectiveness, as the German gun positions were admirably concealed. The rough nature of the country and the darkness favoured the attackers. In my opinion no siege guns were in action. The Germans used a high explosive shell that burst with extraordinary vividness.

About three a.m. infantry fire broke out in the woods west of the River Ourthe, between Embourg

and Boncelles. It was impossible to distinguish anything except the flashes of the rifles. About this time I heard infantry fire in the west. The country in the vicinity of the forts has not been cleared, and evidently only hastily fortified.

The Belgian infantry, 9th and 14th Line Regiments, held the country between the forts Fléron, Embourg, and Boncelles. The 9th Regiment bore the brunt of the attack, which was repulsed along the line.

With the first rays of daylight, about four a.m., I was able to make out the troops of the German line of battle.

They were fighting in close order. I could not believe I was watching the first line, as this seemed to me to be a return to old-fashioned tactics. But there could be no doubt as to their formation. The engagement attained its fiercest stage about five a.m. About this time the fort at Fléron was silenced. I was afterwards told that the German fire had smashed much of the machinery of the disappearing gun carriages.

Small parties of German cavalry could be seen in the intervals between the infantry battalions. But there was no attempt at a cavalry attack.

Towards eight o'clock there was a lull in the attack. The accidental nature of the country to the south favoured the concealment of the Germans. I would not attempt to estimate closely their force at this point. It might have been a division. They

were occupying the intervals between the fortresses, and had as their objective the bridges south of the city.

The attack was checked all along the line. Battalion after battalion was thrown back by the Belgians, whose 9th Regiment of the Line fought like demons.

My own adventures were many and varied. The most stirring was when I was held up by a lancer, who kept his revolver pointed at the pit of my stomach while I explained that I was not a German. Four times I was arrested and brought before the authorities. When I got back into the town the crowd that swarmed on the streets would one minute surround me and threaten me as a German, and the next loudly acclaim me as the first of the arriving English.

That was the question in every mouth. "When would the English come?" The whereabouts of the French was another topic eagerly discussed by the mob.

Panic-stricken refugees came hurrying in during the morning, and continued throughout the day to flood the city. Wherever they could find listeners, which was easy, they would tell the story of their night's experiences. One woman with her two daughters had spent the whole night in the cellar of their home. A shell had exploded in the kitchen. Had any of her family been injured? someone asked.

"Yes, monsieur, the poor cat was dead." A stout gentleman, with a pointed grey beard was inconsolable because his "collection of little birds" had been left behind at the mercy of the Germans.

This influx of frightened outsiders had a very baleful effect on the people of Liège itself. Naturally the discussion of the number of killed and wounded on both sides was the principal topic.

Motors carrying wounded soon began to arrive. These stopped before the hotels or establishments which had been turned into improvised hospitals. "Fifteen beds ready," "Ten beds for wounded here," were signs posted on the doors of many houses.

The news was soon current in the city that the fighting had ceased for the moment. There was to be a conference with the Germans.

The Palace of Liège was now the centre of attraction. "The Germans demanded the immediate surrender of the forts and the city." "The Belgians had asked for twenty-four hours in which to consider this proposal." "The Germans refused, and threatened to bombard the city at once." These and a dozen other rumours ran through the crowds.

Suddenly a loud explosion set every heart thumping. "Had the bombardment commenced?" "No, the Belgian engineers had blown up the arches of the bridge."

But as the afternoon wore on it became known that the Belgian commanders had refused to give

up the city. The bombardment was to begin at six p.m. That was the last word I got.

The last train out of the city was crowded with refugees fleeing with such little property as they could gather together. The scenes were pitiful in the extreme when the train pulled out. Never can one forget the expression of those left behind.

And the scenes in the train!

I carried a woman who must have been between eighty-five and ninety years old up the step of the vehicle and to a rude bench in a third-class carriage. A Sister of Mercy was her only attendant. Before we were half-way to Brussels a priest had given her extreme unction. Opposite me sits a man with four five-week old puppies and the mother in his lap. In the next car are herded a score of German prisoners. The helmets covered with cloth. The insignia gone.

In order to understand the attack which the Belgians so gallantly repulsed during the early hours of the morning it is necessary to have some idea of the country south of Liège.

The most remarkable feature of the terrain is the sharp rise of the hills south of the River Meuse. From the flat banks of the stream the land rises at an angle of fifteen degrees until it reaches 300 feet. These figures are my estimation. The country is wooded and rough.

From a military point of view the section to the south and west of where the River Ourthe joins the Meuse is extremely important. In the first place, the Meuse is crossed here by two bridges, one railway and the other a splendid masonry road bridge built to commemorate the Liège Exposition. This latter is called sometimes the Pont de Fragnée and sometimes the Exposition Bridge. The Pont du Val-Benoit is the name of the railway bridge. The Exposition Bridge has been mined ready for destruction. I could not get a chance to examine the railway bridge. The railways from Hervé and Verviers enter the city over this crossing. As it is certain that the main German force is coming over these lines of communication, the capture of the bridges must be their first object.

The angle between the Rivers Ourthe and Meuse is a flat plain. Besides the railway junction, the angle is occupied by the electric lighting plant, a smelting works, and a gun and small arms factory. These were all in full blast during the day. A coal mine was also being operated.

In addition to these plants, whose value to an invading army is beyond estimation, a force holding the hills to the south would have the city at its mercy. Again, there is another railway running to Namur. So if the Germans are to get anywhere near their second objective this line of communication must be taken.

Nothing could be superior to the resistance put up by the Belgian army to the attacks made between Embourg and Boncelles. The 9th and 14th Regiments of the Line not only checked the advancing Germans, but actually threw them back. The Belgians were greatly helped by the fact that the enemy advanced in close order. Battalion after battalion of Germans were thrown into the fight in solid formation. It is small wonder that they were decimated. However, the estimated number of killed and wounded on their side is certainly exaggerated. Rumour puts it at 25,000. At the assault of Port Arthur where I saw the Japanese swarm up the forts at Ban Ju San, and where there were 400 pieces of artillery in action, the losses from August 16th to the 21st totalled 16,000 on the Japanese side. While the Belgians have inflicted the severest kind of repulse, yet I cannot believe that the enemy's casualties reach the figures given. Still, they have been heavy enough to make them ask for an armistice of twenty-four hours.

The Belgian troops engaged are the 3rd Division and 15th Mixed Brigade. The Germans are reported as the 7th, 9th, and 10th Corps under General von Emmich. The detachments of Germans captured which I have seen have all been cavalry. They are mostly boys of from eighteen to twenty-four years old. Their grey uniforms are stripped of all insignia, and they have covered their helmets with grey drill.

In justice to the attacking force, I must say that their artillery practice was excellent. This fact only adds to the credit of the Belgian defence.

In all honour to the work done by the army, the spirit of the citizens of Liège also merits the highest praise. It takes courage to sit still under a bombardment. And this is what the civilians have had to do. Their courage was also tested to the utmost by the stories of murder and rapine told by the panic-stricken refugees coming in from the outlying towns. Fortunately, so far, the German shells have done little harm to the city proper. Yet it seems contrary to the spirit of our boasted civilisation that the rules of war permit an enemy to drop projectiles among women and children. Liège is a fortified town, and under this classification it is liable to artillery attack without notice.

In a subsequent despatch Mr. Fortescue emphasised the fact that the dogged resistance of the Belgians had been of the highest military importance for two reasons: in the first place, it had given France time to complete her mobilisation; and, in the second, it had given the British army time to mobilise and to begin its landing on the Continent.

At noon on August 11th, the Press Bureau issued a statement showing, *inter alia*, the disposition of the German forces at Liège, so far as

they were known. The statement said that about two German cavalry divisions were reported in the neighbourhood of Tongres; three German corps were still opposite Liège; other German troops were reported to be entrenching the line of the River Aisne.

The large German force was moving through Luxemburg, and the advanced troops were now on the Belgian frontier.

CHAPTER III

Preliminary Atrocities—Bravery of the Belgians—Battle of Haelen-Diest

At this stage of the fighting numerous circumstantial stories of German atrocities began to filter through, though for various reasons large portions of them were deleted by the Censors. They were generally summed up in an official statement by the Belgian Government which is quoted in a subsequent chapter. Dr. Dillon, telegraphing on August 11th, asserted that it was still impossible to throw any light upon the military operations, which might culminate on Thursday or Friday in a terrific collision between the forces of disruption and those of civilisation. Never before, not even during the Japanese campaign against Russia, had the movements of an army been shrouded in such impenetrable mystery. Considering the number, audacity, and ingenuity of the German agents still in Belgium, these precautions were indispensable.

Anyhow, the War Office, the only source of intelligence, contented itself with a brief assurance that the news was satisfactory, or that there was no news of importance to communicate. Concrete facts were learnt mostly from Paris or Holland.

Another fact which was beginning to dawn upon the public was that the heroic resistance of the Belgian army had been offered hitherto to covering troops only, and that the enemy's losses did not exceed 5,000, although three German army corps had been thoroughly beaten. It was believed in Brussels that the hostile main armies would be ready any time after Wednesday night, August 12th. On the 11th several detachments of German covering troops were sent forward to the Belgian advanced posts as feelers. The Belgians when possible concealed themselves in thickets or in fields, and captured a considerable number of the invaders.

One Belgian lancer, named Bogaerts, deserves especial mention. His habit was to sally forth alone, lance in poise, and dash forward against the Uhlans, one of whom he generally killed or wounded, whereupon the remainder gave themselves up. In this way he took fourteen prisoners, wounded several Uhlans, and killed three, without suffering the slightest injury.

Encounters became frequent in the district stretching from Liège to Tongres, Hannut, and Tirlemont, whither two divisions succeeded in penetrating on the 11th.

Already the airships of the different combatants were floating gracefully into the visual range of the Brussels population, but at such a height that one could only conjecture the nationality of each ; and the authorities warned the public neither to fear nor attack the Uhlans.

Anxiety respecting Holland's neutrality was not yet wholly dispelled. Nobody doubted the firm resolve of the Dutch Government to maintain its right to hold aloof from the war, but certain misgivings were entertained as to the adequacy of the troops stationed in the district where the violation of territory by the Germans was most probable. Some months previously Dutch Limburg, possessing only a few squadrons of cavalry, was practically defenceless. Since then a number of infantry battalions were stationed along the frontier from Maastricht to Venloo, together with several companies of the local Landwehr. If, as many military men believed, these troops were the only obstacle to a German advance in Holland, they constituted an inducement rather than a deterrent, it was thought.

German spies and secret agents were still numerous and audacious. Ten days before the declaration of war all trees near the sources of water in the forest of Soignes, outside Brussels, had notices posted up in German, with the words, "Potable water." The Mayor of Brussels had these placards removed, but they were afterwards found posted up anew. On August 12th when a representative of *The Daily Telegraph* was leaving the American Legation, he saw two municipal guards arresting a lady, whom they politely conducted to the police-station. His chauffeur cried, "That's no lady. He is a German spy." A couple of men hearing this rushed up and attempted to maltreat the prisoner, but the guards protected their charge effectually. At the station the prisoner, who looked quite collected, was found to be a male German agent possessed of apparatus for cutting telegraph wires and also of compromising documents. Belgian treatment of Germans, said the correspondent, whether civilians or prisoners, erred on side of humanitarianism if it erred at all.

On the night of August 12th the Press Bureau stated:

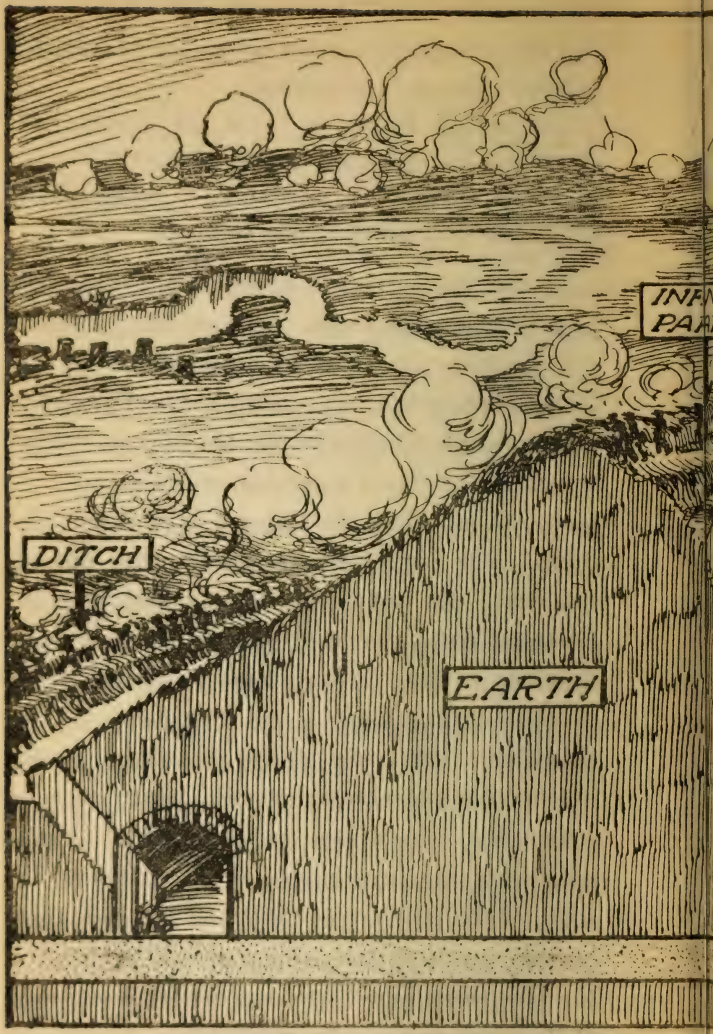
Of the twenty-six German army corps the bulk have now been definitely located, and it is evident

that the mass of the German troops are concentrated between Liège and Luxemburg.

The number known to be on the Western side proves that in the Eastern theatre of war the frontier, as far as Germany is concerned, is comparatively lightly guarded, unless by reserve troops.

At this time, beyond some unimportant outpost fighting near Liège, the position in Belgium was quiet. "A sense of stagnation," as Dr. Dillon expressed it, was creeping over the public. Of the troops massing behind the various cavalry covers, of the enemy's numbers, whereabouts, and plans, nobody but the General Staff knew anything. The vaguest of conjectures were the sole substitute for knowledge. Some held that the Germans, disheartened by their failure to traverse Belgium in three days and by the severe defeat of three army corps, were preparing for the defensive. This view, taken in official circles, was borne out by the circumstance that they were entrenching themselves on the River Ourthe, employing the peasants to make routes in the south of the province of Liège and in Luxemburg, bringing up fresh troops for the reinforcement of the line Maestricht-Liège, and withdrawing most of their covering cavalry regiments.

Passing from the region of conjecture to that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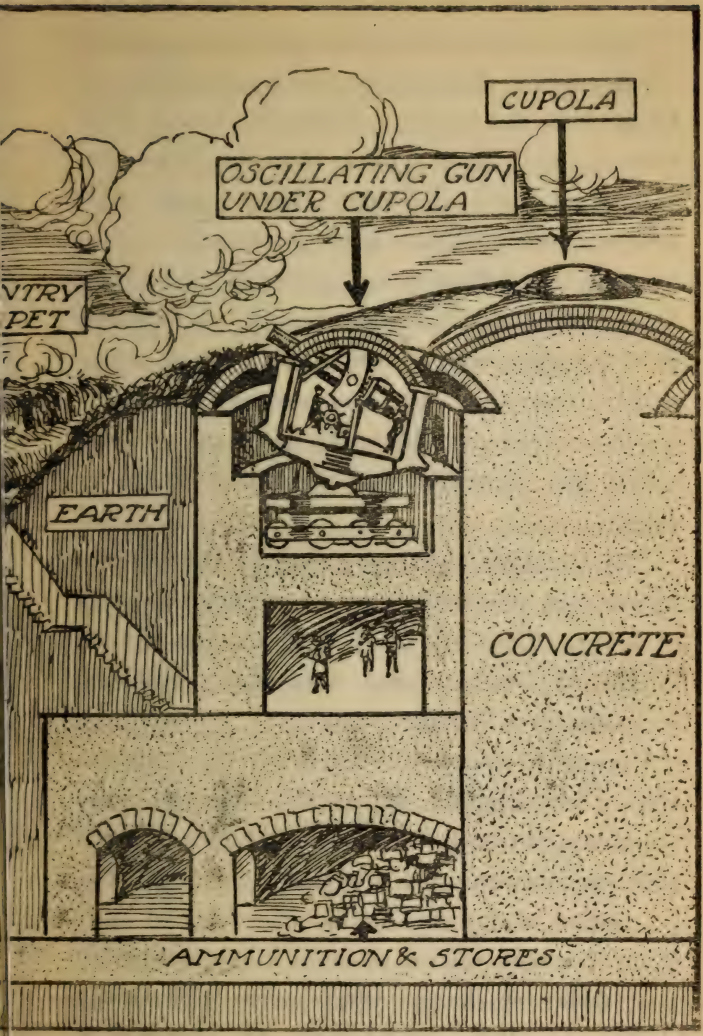
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of fact, it was soon learnt that the enemy's cavalry which advanced on Monday into Belgium to see how the land lay threw out feelers from Hannut and Saint Trond towards Tirlemont, Hougaerde, and Jodoigne. They came with artillery and machine guns, occupied Landen, Neerwinden, Pellaines, and other places, burning houses and hayricks as they passed. A regiment of Belgian lancers met them at Dormael, where a sharp encounter gave a momentary advantage to the defenders, whom the German artillery, which was opened shortly afterwards, forced to retire.

The Germans then proceeded to shoot seven inmates of the houses on an unproved charge of firing. They also burned the houses of the village of Orsmael, and shot three brothers, peasants, on a like allegation.

Universal execration followed the German troops in Belgium, where all observers were unanimous in accusing them of cruelty towards civilians, unwarranted by the attitude of the population and forbidden by the rules of war. Wherever they tarried peaceful inhabitants were shot down on charges which were emphatically denied by their neighbours. At Dormael a Uhlan, seeing a priest go forward to administer

the last sacraments to the agonising wounded, cut him down as if he too were a combatant.

Having compelled the Belgian lancers to retire from Dormael, the German cavalry advanced in the direction of Tirlemont to the number of about 2,000. Arriving at Bost, which is a mile from Tirlemont, they found their further advance barred by Belgian infantry, whereupon they fell back upon Saint Trond and Waremme.

The Belgian troops did not begin the pursuit of the enemy's cavalry until August 11th, when they drove it beyond Waremme.

Liège became a new centre of an artillery action, both offensive and defensive. The Germans pounded away at the forts, their shells exploding on the cupolas and around these, while the forts responded with vigour unimpaired. Meanwhile the invaders began to construct a pontoon over the Meuse at Lixhe, for troops and trains of ammunition and provisions. It was believed that they were also preparing to cross the river above Liège, for they were forwarding heavy war material in the direction of Engis.

Meanwhile, the French cavalry showed themselves to the population of Brussels, who gave them a warm ovation.

The second general engagement in the struggle

for the possession of the Liège forts took place on Wednesday, August 12th, and lasted until the early morning of the 13th. The Germans attempted a "reconnaissance in force," and attacked the Belgian army at two points.

Again, however, the Belgian soldier proved more than a match for the most highly trained troops of the Kaiser. The reconnaissance in force failed utterly. Two of their finest cavalry divisions and two regiments of Jaegers suffered heavy losses in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

The attack was made at two points, one to the north of Namur and the other near Diest, which is a railway junction. About ten in the morning cavalry patrols reported the advance of the enemy towards Haelen, a village about three miles south of Diest. At the head of the force rode the famous 17th Dragoons; behind them marched a regiment of Jaegers with a battery of artillery and machine-guns. Belgian carbineers awaited them at Zelck and succeeded in checking the advance until they could retire on Haelen, which was formerly a fortress.

With reckless courage the Dragoons galloped into what was an armed cul de sac. In front of them was a battery on the mound of the fort, and the road was trenched and barricaded. The

Belgians opened fire from buildings which had been loopholed to meet an attack from that quarter. Under cover of artillery fire and aided by machine-guns the cavalry attempted to carry the position by assault. It was an enterprise that did more credit to the courage than to the judgment of the German soldier.

Mr. William Maxwell, who communicated these facts, added :

At manœuvres in Germany some years ago I remember the Kaiser asking Sir Ian Hamilton what he thought of the infantry formation. Sir Ian ventured to suggest that the formation was too dense. Whereupon the Emperor rebuked him with these words : " Half of those men would be killed, but we can afford to lose them." The cavalry seem to act on this principle. Without a pause they rode upon the barricade, which they attempted to leap. I counted seven dead horses close to the barricade, while others lay writhing a hundred yards off, bearing testimony to the bravery of two-score men who now lie side by side awaiting burial. So stout was the resistance of the 700 Belgians who held this position against a division of cavalry and a regiment of infantry that the enemy soon found it prudent to withdraw. Not allowed to retire unmolested, though pursuit beyond Zelck would have been folly, they

left behind about forty dead, many wounded, and 300 prisoners.

It was remarkable, according to the accounts of eye-witnesses, how readily some of these brave men surrendered. One Belgian officer captured three officers. The first question they asked was, "What is England doing?" They were evidently ignorant that England had declared war. Their second question was, "What of our fleet?" The wounded were treated not only with skill and kindness, but even luxury.

The object of this raid was to feel the nature and strength of the opposing force, and, if possible, to capture points on the railway as well as to threaten the capital in order to strike terror—a phrase so often on the lips of their War Lord—into the heart of the people.

A more detailed version of the Haelen-Diest fight on the road to Louvain says that the encounter lasted all day. The Germans were supported by a battery of artillery. The Belgian field forces fought desperately, and Lieutenant Van Doren even enlisted the Diest fire brigade against the enemy, whose loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners was comparatively heavy.

Many of the prisoners were fainting, and the horses were dying from hunger. The German

attacking party had probably been detached from the Liège right wing for an audacious raid on Louvain and Brussels.

Further details about the Haelen-Diest combat showed that the German losses must have approached 3,000.

The action, when the German mitrailleuses (machine-guns) were captured, took place north of Eghezée, on the road from Liège to Namur. Of course, the main German forces continued to be arrested before Liège, but they sent forth detachments in every direction to make believe that they had carried everything before them in their rear and to create popular panics. Each of these detachments was gradually beaten in its turn, and this slowly weakened the large forces intended for the great general battle, and estimated at about seven army corps, or about 250,000 men.

The following official statement was issued at Brussels on Thursday, August 13th:

The victory gained by the Belgian troops yesterday is now officially confirmed. The Belgian troops engaged were only one cavalry division and a brigade of all arms. The German losses were very heavy, and it is believed that about three-fifths of the enemy

engaged was put out of action. The Belgian losses were relatively slight, only a few men being killed.

The Belgian cavalry division this morning took up the offensive against yesterday's defeated troops, in order, it is believed, to pick up the dead and wounded and to collect the abandoned war material. No German surprise is expected.

Another encounter took place this morning in the south with the German troops reported yesterday to be marching towards Eghezée. These were attacked by our troops and repulsed with very heavy losses. We captured a number of machine guns mounted on motor-cars.

There is no reason to fear any German cavalry movement on Brussels from the south, all roads to the capital being guarded by the army and by the Garde Civique.

The military situation at the time was summed up as follows by Mr. E. Ashmead-Bartlett, *The Daily Telegraph's* military expert:

Every single account of conversations with wounded German soldiers or prisoners serves to show that the rank and file of the German army have not the smallest idea for what they are fighting, and that all profess not to have the smallest desire to invade either France or Belgium. In the war of 1870, the situations were reversed. Every German knew that the future of his country as a world Power depended on victory,

and all marched to the front with a determination to conquer or to die. The French, on the other hand, had no idea for what they were fighting, and their purely professional army left for the war amidst vague cries of " À Berlin ! " buoyed up by no moral principle. These factors must bear a very far-reaching effect on the eventual outcome of the campaign.

In a recent journey through France, I noticed nothing so remarkable as the intense seriousness of the people. Frenchmen will tell you there has been nothing like it since the Revolutionary wars, prior to the Napoleonic epoch, when the levée en masse crushed the invader at Valmy and Jemappes. The French have entered into this struggle through no love of fighting, but because they know their existence as an independent nation is at stake. One other fact must also be noted before the chances of the opposing armies are examined. In 1870 the French regular army, which should have had a peace strength of 400,000 men, only numbered 270,000, whereas the Germans, at the very start of the campaign, stood at a total war strength of over 1,200,000 men.

This inequality no longer exists. On paper Germany has a considerable superiority of numbers, namely twenty-five army corps against twenty-one, and her reserves are probably more numerous and better organised than those of the French. On the other hand, she is, according to the most reliable

information, keeping four corps on the Russian frontier, and, therefore, the numbers available against France should certainly not show any superiority, and will probably show an inferiority when the Belgian and British armies are united along the line of the Meuse. For years German strategists have reckoned on having to fight both France and Russia at the same time, and they have professed themselves as being confident of undertaking such a gigantic task. Four corps especially trained under Von der Goltz to fight in more open formations were to hold the Russians, whilst the remaining twenty-one were to be flung with such rapidity against France as to obtain a decisive success before Russian intervention could make itself seriously felt.

It is one thing to have twenty-one army corps ready to invade France, and quite another to find a suitable front on which to deploy them for such an invasion. All the time-honoured old routes for the invasion of France are practically closed to modern armies by the chain of fortresses which the French have constructed, and, vice versa, the old roads to Germany are closed to a French invasion. Therefore, French, German, and Belgian strategists have long recognised that the only route by which a modern German army could invade France and march on Paris would be via Belgium, and that declarations of neutrality would count but little in the strategic scale. It was to resist such a menace that the Belgians

constructed two fortified camps at Liège and Namur. The old routes of 1870 present too many formidable obstacles to be overcome. A direct advance into France from Alsace would have found itself faced by the fortified front Belfort-Epinal-Toul, and Verdun, four formidable fortified camps, supported by forts on the heights overlooking the Moselle and Meuse.

There are only two routes by which this line can be passed. That by way of Charmes, between Epinal and Toul, protected by the fort of Manonvillers, which would enable the Germans to enter Haut Marne and to gain the valley of the Seine, and the road to Paris via Bar-le-Duc, St. Dizier, and Troyes. This is the theatre of war of 1814, and also the road used by the Crown Prince after Froeschwiller, in 1870. But an invading army would have to take or mask all these entrenched camps, which would take a very long time, or else have his communications continually threatened.

The other road is that by Dun-Stenay, north of Verdun, passing through the defiles of Côtes-de-Meuse and the forest of Argonne to the open country round Valmy. But this country is extremely difficult for military operations on a large scale. It was used by the Duke of Brunswick in 1792.

The Germans confidently expected to overrun the whole of Belgium and to gain the French frontier before a single French corps could be concentrated to offer any serious resistance. They reckoned on

two factors which have turned out the reverse of what they hoped. They relied on a partial breakdown in the French mobilisation, especially on the railway lines. In this supposition they have been completely mistaken. Nothing so far has been so remarkable as the smooth working of the railway service, and, consequently, the rapid concentration of the French armies. The second factor on which the Germans relied was the readiness of the Belgians to see their country overrun by a swarm of invaders or else their inability to resist such an invasion. The quickest route into Belgium is to cross the Meuse at Liège, and from there to march south by the left bank along the Mons-Charleroi road, and to gain the French frontier between Maubeuge and Valenciennes. Of recent years the Germans have made every preparation for such a move. They have organised depôts for troops and collected large masses of stores, and have quadrupled lines at Aix-la-Chapelle, Malmedy, St. Vith, Bitburg, and Trèves. They can thus rapidly concentrate immense numbers of troops from Dusseldorf, Cologne, and Coblenz in front of Liège.

But the stubborn and unexpected defence of Liège has thrown all their plans for a direct advance into Belgium via the Liège-Namur line out of gear, and, to judge from the meagre reports which are coming through slowly, they have entrenched that line strongly, and are holding it on the left bank of the Meuse with the two corps which were so roughly

handled while the bulk of their forces are preparing to cross the Belgian frontier further north on the line Maestricht-Roermonde, and to march on Brussels through the Duchy of Limburg. We read of constant cavalry engagements in this district and of partial defeats of the German troops, but these stories must not be taken too seriously, as the German cavalry is merely being used as a screen to cover the concentration of immense masses of infantry who will soon be making their presence felt.

CHAPTER IV

Life at Brussels—French Advance—Capital removed to Antwerp

A striking description of life in and around Brussels at this time is given by Dr. Dillon:

Brussels is herself again. The delirious excitement which during the first days of mobilisation displayed itself in acts of frenzy has subsided. The inhabitants have adjusted themselves to the wearisome suspense and unpleasant surprises of a state of war. Shops that were shuttered a few days ago are open and doing a brisk business once more. The cafés are thronged inside and out. The boulevards are bright with streams of many-coloured humanity. The newspapers which dish up the same stories day after day are grabbed at by citizens eager to obtain the first news of the military movements.

The only striking differences one discerns between this and normal times affect the lives of the well-to-do classes. All the theatres, cinematographs, and other places of amusement are closed. Some of the principal hotels are turned into temporary

hospitals. Public conveyances, whether cabs or taxis, can hardly be said to exist. Certain sorts of food which were formerly exported, such as peaches, grapes, and chickens, have hardly any market and are being sold at half prices. Flowers are withering on their stalks for lack of buyers. Artisans, such as electricians and plumbers, have vanished.

Notwithstanding these changes, added Dr. Dillon, the links with the cheerful life of a month ago had not yet been severed. The people of Brussels were still blithesome and self-confident, buoyed up by the sense of security imparted by the heroic conduct of their defenders and the consciousness of a right cause. As yet the unquiet temper of war had nowhere manifested itself, yet maimed warriors, homeless families, destitute women, orphaned children, claimed and received attention, and reminded the observer all too suggestively of the harvest of misery yet to be garnered in.

A couple of hours' drive out of the town took one to a world of grim realities and sinister contrasts. Over the country between Tirlemont and Saint Trond, but yesterday full of tame beauty, rich in cornfields and carefully tended gardens, the withering breath of the ruthless Moloch had already fitfully passed. As the

traveller moved along the dusty road, catching a glimpse of an occasional farmhouse quivering in the distance through the heat of the August day, he might well feel beset by the vague dangers that might at any moment have started into concrete shape and ended his hopes and cares for all time.

As one approached the village of Orsmael at this time unmistakable tokens of desolation thrust themselves on the view. At first shattered panes of glass, then domestic utensils flung among the cabbages of the gardens or before the wrenched doors, greybeards with shrivelled faces moaning under the trees, women trembling and wailing plaintively, and still beholding as a mirage the scenes of horror which upset their mental balance. Here a couple of children prattling in subdued tones, there a mother leading three orphaned little girls from the still smoking ruins of their house into the wide world, and everywhere the loathsome soilure and squalor of war.

Inhuman hate appeared to possess those Prussian invaders, whom terror drove and terror alone could curb. Belgians who dealt with them at close quarters, as at Dormael, declared that these Uhlans fought with the bitterness of personal fury, and, not content with killing those who

manfully resisted them in fight, assassinated numbers who had laid down their weapons and held their hands up. Many of the corpses have their hands raised and their elbows on a level with the shoulders. The wounds of these brave defenders are horrible, having been inflicted with weapons fired at a distance of a couple of inches from the mouth or breast.

Some Uhlans met a Belgian chemist who was riding a bicycle near Jodoigne. Arresting him they inquired their way to the town hall, placing the muzzles of revolvers to his head while they listened. He gave them the required information and was allowed to pass on, but before he had gone ten yards they sent three bullets into his back.

On Friday afternoon, August 14th, the Press Bureau issued the following statement, summing up the position in Northern Belgium :

(1) After a successful resistance of five days at the passes of Sainte Marie aux Mines and Le Bonhomme, the French troops have occupied the region of the Saale Pass, which commands the valley of the Burche, an affluent of the Rhine.

(2) At Saale numerous desertions from the German troops are notified. The French have taken many prisoners, and have captured some machine-guns.

(3) It is now confirmed that in Belgium the Belgians were successful in an engagement which took place on August 12th between their troops and six regiments of German cavalry, supported by 2,500 infantry, machine-guns and artillery. The enemy was completely disorganised; the six cavalry regiments suffered great losses, and the Belgians pursued the infantry which gave way.

(4) This (Friday) morning, towards Eghezée, sixteen kilomètres to the north of Namur, a mixed detachment from the garrison surprised some German cavalry regiments in camp, threw them into confusion and forced them back towards the east, after taking numerous prisoners and capturing cannon and machine-guns. To the south of the Meuse the German cavalry avoids contact with the French.

(5) The news of fighting about Haelen yesterday is confirmed. The Germans were driven back eastwards, and there is now no German cavalry between Hasselt and Ramillies.

(6) Liège forts are reported to be still holding out, and to have plenty of supplies.

(7) German cavalry patrols are now reported north of Montmedy.

(8) General Joffre, by virtue of the powers conferred on him by the Ministry of War (decision of

August 8th, 1914), has made Lieutenant Bruyant, of the Dragoons, a Knight of the Legion of Honour. "This officer," it is stated in the text of his appointment, "accompanied by seven horsemen, did not hesitate to charge a platoon of some thirty Uhlans: he killed the officer in charge of them with his own hand, and routed the German platoon, inflicting severe losses upon it."

(9) The Commander-in-Chief has conferred the first war medal of the campaign on Escoffier, Corporal of Dragoons, for having charged with the greatest courage and received several wounds.

(10) Belgian cyclists and cavalry from Namur surprised yesterday a force of German cavalry, accompanied by artillery and machine-guns, and compelled them to retire. The Germans lost a field gun and several machine-guns.

The French army was meanwhile making good progress, and on the night of the 14th it was officially announced by the War Ministry in Paris that the French were entering Belgium through Charleroi and were proceeding in the direction of Gembloux, some thirty miles to the north-east.

Reports were current on Friday evening that the German attack had been renewed, but these

were afterwards seen to be baseless. The German forces around Liège were content to remain on the defensive for a time; and even towards the south, in the Vosges, the French troops were slowly driving the invaders before them. At Liège itself several bodies of the enemy had taken up their position in the town, but the forts were still intact. An observer of the scene at this juncture commented on the changed physiognomy of that once gay capital of the Walloon country. Some 30,000 of the inhabitants had fled from the place in terror when the enemy's guns began to shower shells upon the forts from Fléron. The remainder buried themselves in cellars and underground passages, scores huddling together without food, drink, or other of life's necessaries. The city bore marks of havoc everywhere. Gaping bridges, half-demolished houses, many without doors, which had been taken off their hinges and cast into the courtyard or the roadside, fallen roofs, smouldering ruins, told their dismal tale.

There was not a street in which shells had not fallen. The very asphalt was ploughed up in places like a cornfield at sowing time. Hurriedly-made graves with their soft mounds protruded in unexpected places. During the day the Germans

were everywhere in evidence: they patrolled the principal thoroughfares, stood at the barricades which they had raised at all the approaches to the town, or crept up towards the forts with remarkable recklessness. Nine of them on bicycles rode to within 300 mètres of the forts one morning; eight returned unharmed, only one paying for the pleasant sense of daring adventure with his life. The inhabitants were cowed by recent deterrent examples and by the terrors hanging over them.

At nightfall the city assumed the aspect of a churchyard. The silence was soul-curdling, yet the hearts of the inhabitants beat quicker and louder when that silence was broken by the heavy tread of the Prussian patrols or the rending thunder of heavy guns. All the doors still extant had to be kept wide open. Early in the morning when the bakers removed their bread from the ovens, German guards, posted wherever victuals are to be had, were in the habit of pouncing down on the entire output of the bakeries, for which they sometimes paid; but the ill-starred inhabitants had no share. The soldiers made their own coffee and soup in great motor cauldrons, from which it was poured into metal porringers that they carry with them. They now wore

reformed field uniforms, rendering them hardly distinguishable from a distance, just as their airships were so re-painted as to resemble the grey of cloudland.

At Haelen and Diest, the scene of Wednesday's engagement, one drew nearer to the ghastly realities of war. The struggle waxed desperate, man meeting man, striking, thrusting, and wrestling in the final fight for life or death. Here the once peaceful country-side was utterly transformed. In the background heaps of ruins that so lately were farmhouses still emitted pungent smoke. Between the leafy trees one saw the charred rents in the dwellings still erect, animals erring hither and thither, barricades hastily erected of dead horses, their horrible wounds gaping and spreading the mephitic reek of death, and along the carriage-road on either side freshly-made ridges which hid the German dead.

The serious attention of the civilised world was at this juncture once again directed to the inhuman methods of warfare practised by the German soldiery in Belgium, else, it was declared, the campaign would assume a character of fiendish savagery unmatched in the annals of war. "Unless some real respect be shown to

the usages received by civilised nations," said one observer, "both sides will end by making no prisoners. If even a tithe of the narratives now passing from mouth to mouth about the atrocities committed by the invaders be well founded—and they are vouched for by credible and level-headed clergymen, mayors, and foreigners who feel no personal animus against the Germans—the soldiery of the Fatherland have outrun the Hercules pillars of inhumanity."

Another report stated that the Germans in Liège were trying to fraternise with the Belgians, and that German military bands played daily in the two Belgian cafés.

About the middle of August a Belgian who had a relative at Port Talbot, Cardiff, wrote:

Every day brings to light new acts of heroism displayed by the plucky little Belgians, whilst several more no doubt have been accomplished, of which we shall never hear. Their heroes are either too silent or for ever silent. Lupin, a boy of eighteen, a corporal in the regiment of Major Jeanne, who himself was nearly killed during the battle of Liège, has died, a great hero in the eyes of his whole regiment.

One of his comrades who has known Lupin for years

tells this pathetic story, which Major Jeanne has himself brought to light. "We were on the right bank of the river Meuse at Bellaire, which is not far above Jupille, and we were in close touch with a German battery. The musketry on both sides was terrible. I was stretched out flat, continuously loading and shooting, and could feel my gun getting hot. Bullets were flattening their noses in front of me, raising clouds of sand and dust. My mouth, eyes, and ears were full of powder. Corpses were heaped round me, their faces black with powder, and stamped with the horrible grimace of death; their hands, with swollen veins, gripping their deadly Mausers. Yes, war is magnificently terrible.

"All at once the Germans adopted new tactics, and I must give them credit for being a cute lot. They seemed to withdraw from their position, and we could distinctly notice their ranks splitting as if in great confusion, but it was only to bring to the front some more artillery which had been rushing from behind. The move was smartly executed, the ranks closed again, and for a time they seemed as if they were going to have the advantage over us.

"But now young Lupin had seen his chance looming, and what he did altogether changed the face of things. 'Leave them to me now,' was what someone heard him say, and like a flash the boy dashed off under cover of a

ditch on the left. Only a few of us had seen it, but Major Jeanne knew his corporal of eighteen, and knew he was up to something grand. Watching him, he shouted, 'Go for them! Get at those square-heads with your bullets. Fire!'

"In the meantime Lupin had managed to get to the left of the German battery, and at 300 mètres distance he sheltered behind a wall. He took aim at the battery in enfilade, and under the fire of his Mauser brought down in quick succession the chief officer, the under-officers, and the artillerymen. This time real confusion took place at the German battery, which was nearly silenced, the Germans, thinking that a whole platoon was now attacking them from behind the wall, directed their last piece of artillery on the wall, and with a terrific crash the wall came down, burying the brave Corporal Lupin. The boy's bravery had weakened the German position, and it did not take us long to scatter them, and put another victory on our list."

On Saturday and Sunday, August 15th and 16th, there was little definite news from any part of the theatre of war. There was some fighting in the south undoubtedly, and a French force defeated a strong body of Bavarians, capturing 500 prisoners. At Dinant, in Belgium, there was another stiff engagement, but no details of

it came to hand for a few days. An authoritative report was given out at Brussels to the effect that the Germans had lost more than 25,000 killed, wounded, and prisoners at Liège—more than half an army corps. These losses, of course, would have been reckoned as trivial if the Germans had succeeded in their original design of executing a "military promenade" through Belgian territory. Apart from the scarcity of food, already referred to, the besieging forces at Liège suffered from lack of horses, and cavalry reconnaissances were gradually becoming impossible.

On Monday, August 17th, it was officially announced that the British Expeditionary Force had been safely landed on French soil; and it was at the same time stated that the French army had scored some successes in Upper Alsace. The movement of this wing of General Joffre's army appeared to extend from the Swiss frontier at Altkirch, near Mülhausen, as far away as Château Salins, a distance of eighty miles. Its object, which was afterwards frustrated by a strong German advance, was to isolate and "contain" the great fortresses of Metz and Strassburg. The two official notices issued by the War Ministry in Paris describe these operations:

Sunday Midnight [*i.e.*, August 16th].

The forward movement has been developed along the whole front from Réchicourt to Sainte Marie-aux-Mines. In the Vosges we have carried Sainte Marie-aux-Mines and made progress towards Sainte Blaise.

The French troops which occupied the Donon yesterday have advanced. In the valley of Schirmeck especially their progress has been extremely rapid. We have taken 1,000 prisoners, in addition to the 500 captured yesterday. Large quantities of equipment have been abandoned by the enemy.

In this district, as at Sainte Marie, we have captured guns of large calibre, field-guns, and ammunition.

In the region Blamont—Cirey we have gained the heights of Lorquin, and in doing so have taken the convoy of a division of German cavalry, consisting of nineteen motor wagons.

In the attack on Dinant the enemy's forces consisted of the Cavalry Division of the Guard and the First Division of Cavalry, supported by infantry from several battalions and some companies with maxims. When these forces appeared on the left bank the French troops attacked them. This attack, delivered with magnificent dash, soon drove the enemy back, and they recrossed the Meuse in great

disorder. Many were unable to regain the bridge, and fell into the river, which at this point has steep banks and flows swiftly. Numbers of the enemy were drowned.

Taking advantage of this disorder, one of our Chasseur cavalry regiments crossed the river after the Germans and pursued them for several kilomètres. Several hundred horses belonging to the Uhlans were captured and subsequently passed to the rear for remount purposes. In this pursuit the French regiment put to flight forces of the enemy considerably superior to itself in numbers.

Monday (11 a.m.) [*i.e.*, August 17th].

Our advance continues to develop. Our troops have carried the heights to the north of the frontier, and their lines pass Breschwiller, Lorquin, Azaudange, Marsal.

In the Donon region we occupy Schirmeck, 7½ miles beyond Saales.

The number of field-guns taken by us at this point is not four, as was stated yesterday, but twelve, as well as twelve limbers and eight maxims. Our cavalry has pushed forward as far as Lutzelhausen and Muhlbach.

Further to the south we have occupied Ville, to the east of the Pass of Urbans, on the road to Schlestadt. Thann, Cernay, and Dannemarie are occupied.

At Blamont, a village from which the Germans have just been driven by our troops, they had, without reason or provocation, put to death three persons, of whom one was a young girl and another an old man of eighty-six, whose name was M. Barthélemy, and who was an ex-Mayor of the village.

On Monday, August 17th, the Queen of the Belgians and the Ministers for War, Finance, and Foreign Affairs retired from Brussels to Antwerp with the Ministers of France and Russia, who left French interests in the hands of the Spanish Legation.

It was officially stated that this was according to long pre-arranged and Constitutional arrangements, and not because the military situation was disquieting. The families of the withdrawing Ministers remained in Brussels, which was protected by over 20,000 Civic Guards, entrenched behind barbed-wire fences, making the capital quite safe against surprise attack.

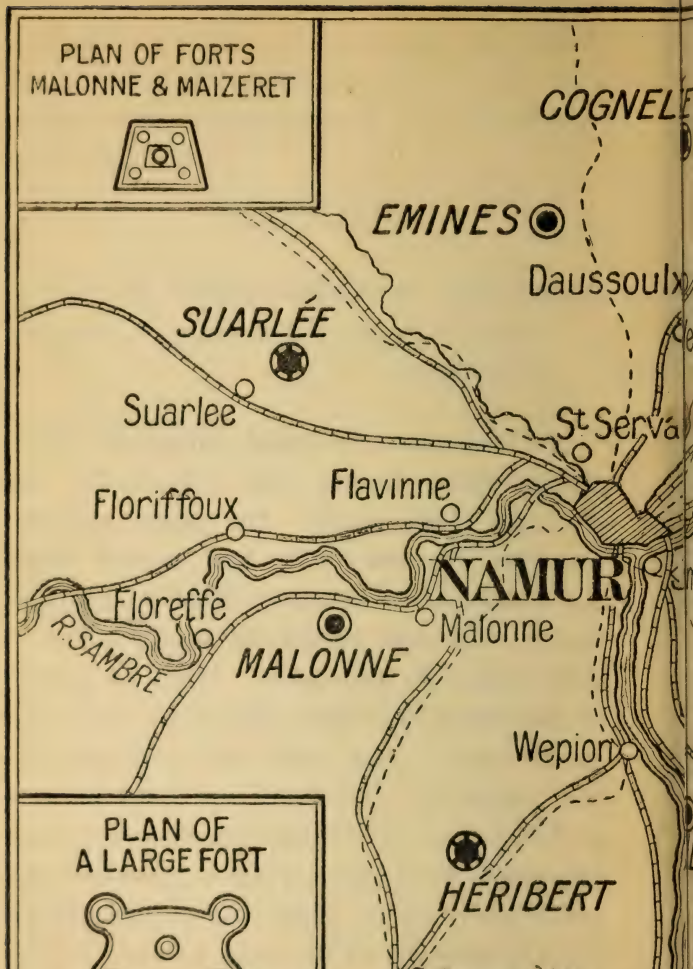
This move was really made because the Germans had managed to bring up heavy siege guns; and, although the forts were still holding out, arrangements were gradually being made to "contain" them and to advance on the capital with the main army. The Belgian Government

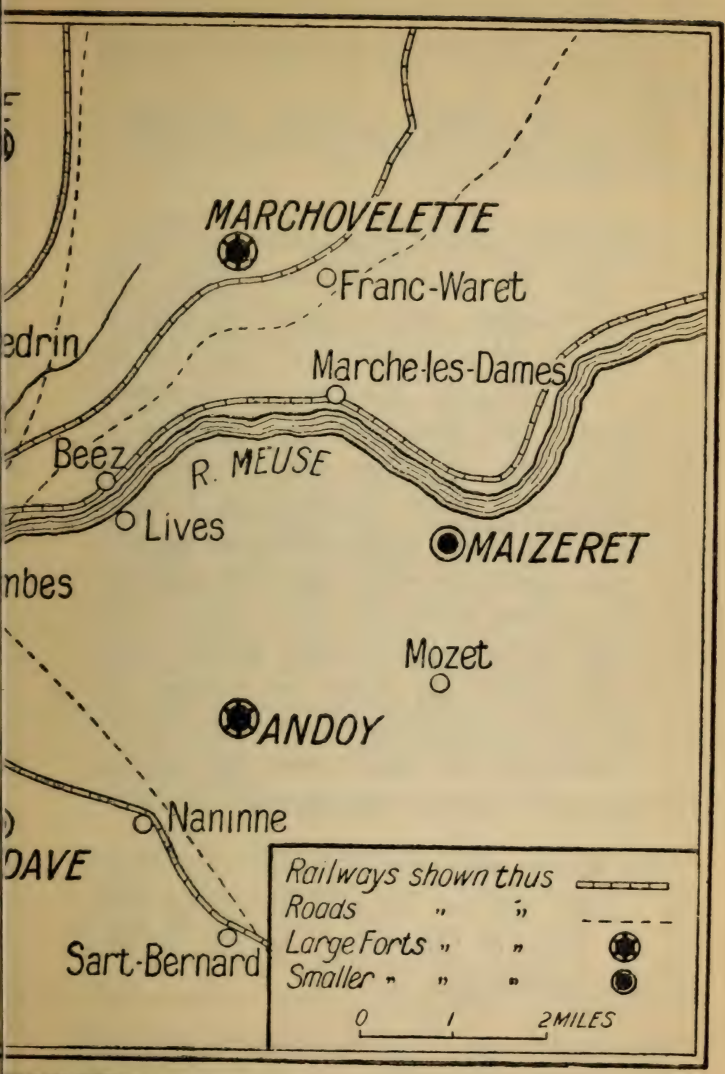
afterwards decided not to attempt to defend Brussels, and the barricades which had been erected were dismantled and the barbed-wire fences taken down.

CHAPTER V

Preparations at Namur—Scenes at Liège—Germans Pressing Forward—Occupation of Brussels

In the meantime the second stronghold of the Belgian army, Namur, was prepared for the onslaught of the enemy. On August 13th Mr. Granville Fortescue, who had arrived there, noted that the city exhibited all the grim circumstances of a siege except the actual falling of shells within its boundaries. When he arrived at the station he followed the crowd, which was herded into a corner until each passenger had been examined. One could not move without a "laissez-passer." Soldiers patrolled the streets, and every few hundred yards pedestrians were halted and made to show their papers. Barricades commanded all the main avenues into the city. They had been made by dragging enormous goods vans across the street and turning the van into a sort of blockhouse. The sides were pierced





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for rifle fire, and sand bags were piled breast-high inside.

Defences of sand bags and earth were built at either side of the van.

Suddenly the whirl of an aeroplane sounds overhead. Then we hear a scattered volley. The aeroplane is German, and the garrison are trying to pot it, despite the fact that it must be 2,000 feet up. They are striking in appearance, these German aeroplanes. Once seen it is easy afterwards to distinguish them. Seen from directly below, it is best described as scarab shaped—what I should imagine a giant scarab would look like on the wing. The whole machine is white, except for a panel of sky blue painted across the centre of each wing. The engine of the German machine makes a louder noise than either the French or Belgian. The aeroplane we were watching circled above the forts and remained in this vicinity about half an hour. Then it turned about and disappeared to the east.

The Kaiser, with three of his sons, left Berlin on August 17th for Mayence, about 100 miles to the north of Strassburg; but he did not venture upon Belgian soil.

An English officer who returned to England from Brussels at this time had had the most

interesting experience, and, it should be added, privilege, of chatting with one of the heroic defenders of Liège, a Belgian officer. To a representative of *The Daily Telegraph* he said :

I never had any doubt that the Belgians were plucky fellows. The defence of Liège shows them in heroic light.

One of them, in the course of a casual conversation, which would not have given you any idea that he, or any of his colleagues, had taken part in anything extraordinary, said : " Some of us late arrivals only managed to get to our posts when the German attack began. It was night-time. We replied sharply with our guns. Until the dawn came we had no very distinct idea of what our practice was. Then we noticed heaps of slain Germans in a semi-circle at the foot of our fort. The German guns must have been much less successful, because they rarely hit us that night. They did better at daybreak. We did better still.

" As line after line of the German infantry advanced, we simply mowed them down. It was terribly easy, monsieur, and I turned to a brother officer of mine more than once and said, ' Voilà ! They are coming on again, in a dense, close formation ! They must be mad ! ' They made no attempt at deploying, but came on, line after line, almost shoulder to shoulder, until, as we shot them down, the fallen

were heaped one on top of the other, in an awful barricade of dead and wounded men that threatened to mask our guns and cause us trouble. I thought of Napoleon's saying—if he said it, monsieur; and I doubt it, for he had no care of human life!—'C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre!' No, it was slaughter—just slaughter!

"So high became the barricade of the dead and wounded that we did not know whether to fire through it or to go out and clear openings with our hands. We would have liked to extricate some of the wounded from the dead, but we dared not. A stiff wind carried away the smoke of the guns quickly, and we could see some of the wounded men trying to release themselves from their terrible position. I will confess I crossed myself, and could have wished that the smoke had remained!

"But, would you believe it, this veritable wall of dead and dying actually enabled these wonderful Germans to creep closer, and actually charge up the glacis? Of course, they got no farther than half way, for our maxims and rifles swept them back. Of course, we had our own losses, but they were slight compared with the carnage inflicted upon our enemies."

The English officer added:

"There is, as you know, quite a large colony of English people in Brussels, and also in Bruges. They

have their English club and tennis courts. Many of these Britishers have their own houses, and live in Belgium for three or six months every year. When the war broke out all but those owning, or renting, property were advised to leave the country, which they did. Many English householders in Belgium also closed their residences and left for England.

"The Belgians were at first extremely dubious of our intention to send troops to Belgium to support them, and night after night, at a certain well-known seaside resort, they crowded about the British Consulate for news. When it was definitely known that the British Expeditionary Force had started Belgian men and women asked for the Union Jack to be brought out by the Consul, and when this was done they filed past, kissing it. I saw this with my own eyes."

On the 18th it became evident that the German forces had gathered on the line Maastricht-Liège and were about to make an attempt to penetrate the allied armies facing them. There was no serious fighting on this date, but German cavalry were seen in the direction of Antwerp.

The long-expected battle appeared to have begun on the 19th (Wednesday), and Tirlemont, a town some twenty-three miles from Brussels, on the railway to Liège, was said to be its centre.

Refugees hurried into Brussels from Aerschot and Diest, and hundreds of civilians from Tirlemont also made for the capital.

Saarburg was occupied by the French on the same day.

The great German advance on Belgium was begun on Friday, August 21st, in a line extending from Dinant, a town to the south of Namur, as far as a point opposite Antwerp. About noon Brussels was reached and occupied. The following account of the position of the Belgian Government was issued officially just before the capital was transferred to Antwerp:

At the present moment the general situation in the Belgian theatre of war may be described as follows: After having lost a great deal of time, a large number of men, and a great quantity of material, the Prussian army has managed to gain ground on both banks of the Meuse up to a line where it is in contact with the allied armies. The German troops on the north side of the Meuse belong to various corps, whose operations have been principally directed against Liège, and who in the course of time have become available in other directions. There is also a strong force of cavalry, by means of which the Germans have been able to make a great show by extending to the north and south.

In the south they came into collision with our troops and the French troops, and were repulsed. In the north, on the other hand, they found an open road, and small portions of them managed to make dashes far afield. In a word, the Germans have taken the measure of our position, but that they should have lost a fortnight in attaining this result is all to the honour of our arms. That may have incalculable consequences for the issues of the operations. The normal development of the latter, according to the plan concerted between the allies, may lead to the carrying out of "manœuvres," that is to say, to changes of position in order to effect a change in the general situation.

We are on the outside wing, where these manœuvres are nearly always necessitated, either for the direct or indirect protection of the flank. Our army, therefore, must necessarily modify its original positions, and thus carry out completely the first task devolving upon it, which consists in gaining time. There is, consequently, no ground for anxiety if the army makes a movement in such and such a direction, and armchair strategists need not occupy themselves with the arrangements made, but should realise that our army now belongs to a co-ordinated whole, and remember that the strategic conditions have entirely changed since close contact has been established with our allies on our right.

The object of the operations as at present going

on is not to cover such and such a district or such and such a town, which has now become a matter of only secondary importance. The pursuit of the aim assigned to the Belgian troops in the general plan of campaign preponderates over everything. This object cannot be revealed, and the most well-informed persons are unable to discover it in view of the veil of obscurity which is rightly being spread over all the news allowed to come through regarding the operations.

Fighting is going on along the whole front from Bale to Diest. The closer the contact comes between the two armies and the closer one gets to a decisive action, the more one must expect to see an advantage gained at one point while ground is lost at another. That is only to be expected in the case of battles taking place over such immense fronts as those occupied by the great armies of modern times.

To sum up, one may say that what is going on at our gates is not the only thing to be thought of. A strategic movement conceived with a well-defined object is not necessarily a retreat. The fighting which has taken place at the front during the last few days has resulted in making the enemy more circumspect and in delaying his forward march to the great advantage of the whole scheme of operations. There is no reason at the present time for letting oneself be hung up, thus playing into the hands of the Germans. That is the motive of the

movements now being carried out. We are not beaten, far from it, but are making arrangements for beating the enemy in the best possible conditions. The public should, in this matter, place all trust in the commander of the army, and should remain calm and confident.

The outcome of the struggle does not appear doubtful. Meanwhile the newspapers should abstain from mentioning movements of troops, as secrecy is essential for the success of the operations.

The exodus from Brussels was vividly described in a telegram from Mr. A. J. Rorke, the correspondent of the Central News Agency. He wired, under date of August 20th :

I left Brussels at three o'clock this morning, with the Germans at its very gates.

All through the evening, following the evacuation of Tirlemont, Louvain, and neighbouring villages, there had been coming into the city from all the roads leading into it one unending procession of old men, women, children, and wounded soldiers retreating before the advance of the Uhlan vanguard.

They came into the centre of the city, clamouring at the Gare du Nord for tickets to the coast, but the trains were all reserved for the hosts of wounded brought in by motor-ambulances and carts from the firing-line.

Most of the men had been wounded in the head and face, disproving the repeated stories that the Germans were bad marksmen and aimed low.

As a matter of fact, practically all the men wounded in yesterday's battle were hit high, proving that the Germans, infantrymen and cavalrymen, are firing from the hip.

Later came the news that there would probably be no more trains out of Brussels, so the more timid of the population began to prepare hurriedly for departure.

A dramatic moment in the history of Europe occurred when the Civic Guard, unwillingly, and only on instructions from the Executive Government at Antwerp, abandoned their defensive on the outskirts of the city, and in the forest around the town, and marched into Brussels.

They were ordered to Ghent, and singing, with unbroken spirit, the "Marseillaise," the strains of which rose over the murmurs of a panic-stricken population, they entered the railroad station.

And so Brussels, undefended, evacuated by its troops unwillingly, though their going really showed a finer spirit of patriotism than death on a battlefield, awaited the arrival of the "modern Huns."

Just before I left early this morning a rumour, which at that hour I was unable to confirm, spread through the city that the French had arrived, and

that the Turcos were actually in action with the Germans on the Louvain road.

These facts must stand out in the battle of yesterday.

One long line of burning villages marked the German advance, and three regiments of Belgian troops are no more. They are, I hear, the First Regiment of Guides and the Third and Ninth Regiments of the Line.

A weeping woman whom I took into my automobile drew from her breast, on the road to Ghent, a blue cap with a yellow facing, upon which was the figure "3."

"Voilà une casquette d'un de nos braves petits soldats," she said to me, "mais il n'y a plus du Troisième."

As Mr. William Maxwell pointed out, the real capital of Belgium, in the military sense, had always been Antwerp, not Brussels; and Napoleon himself gave one of his generals to understand, in explicit terms, that there could be no glory in entering the undefended capital of an enemy's country. "Most of the country the Germans have overrun up to the present," said Mr. Maxwell, "has not been seriously contested, for it does not enter into the Allies' plan of action." Antwerp, as an important Belgian official ex-

plained, was provisioned for an indefinite period; it could be supplied with stores of every kind from the sea; and it was calculated that the forts would be able to hold out for at least a year. In these circumstances the Belgian army entrenched there would always be a menace to the right wing of the Germans, who would be obliged to detach a large part of their forces to prevent an attack from that direction.

Great indignation was aroused all over Europe when it became known that the Germans had imposed a war levy on Brussels of no less a sum than £8,000,000, the alternative being the sacking of the city, with all its priceless art treasures. A levy of £2,000,000 had already been imposed on the province of Liège.

The Germans made their official entry into Brussels at two o'clock in the afternoon of Friday, August 21st. To the eternal credit of the people it must be said that they betrayed not the slightest sign of panic, but faced their painful uncertainty with dignity and courage.

The Civil Guard, of whom 20,000 were in Brussels, were uniformed men, and may be compared to our old volunteers. They had made preparations to resist the capture of the city, and had covered the approaches with

trenches and barbed wire entanglements. But Brussels is not a fortified place, and armed opposition would have involved severe penalties. The Guard, therefore, withdrew from the capital soon after midnight. They retired with the honours of war, singing songs of victory.

For some days the citizens had recognised the possibility of having the Germans for their uninvited guests, and when Louvain was abandoned they accepted the inevitable. The spirit they manifested was reflected in a dignified and courageous proclamation by their burgomeister.

At six o'clock in the morning the enemy's cavalry appeared at Tervueren, a distant suburb of the capital. From that hour every door was closed, and every window was darkened with shutter or blind. From the outskirts people began to flock into the heart of the city, yet there was no panic-fear. At nine o'clock the capital was surrounded, but no entry was made until after two o'clock. The occupation proceeded with method. Railway stations and telegraph and telephone offices were taken over, and sentries were posted on all the main roads. The city, which was crowded twelve hours before, looked like a deserted place.

Pushing on from Brussels the same evening, the Germans took possession of the undefended cities of Ghent and Bruges, and advance brigades of cavalry made their appearance at Ostend, which was occupied shortly afterwards. This advance—of no military importance, and savouring of what is colloquially known as window-dressing—was more than compensated for by a series of French successes in Alsace-Lorraine. General Joffre's forces drove the Germans out of several of the smaller towns, captured many hundreds of prisoners, and took ninety-one guns from the enemy.

Coincidentally with the arrival of the Germans in Brussels, it was announced that this country would lend our Belgian allies the sum of £10,000,000 in recognition of their splendid services at the beginning of the war.

The first complete account of the fighting at Dinant a few days previously was given in a special message from Mr. Granville Fortescue. Writing from Dinant on August 15th, Mr. Fortescue said :

A considerable force of German light infantry, supported by mountain batteries, to-day made a determined attack on this town. The fight lasted from

daylight till dark. Although the Germans had some success in the morning, the arrival of French reinforcements compelled them to evacuate the excellent positions they had taken.

The first shell just missed the clock above the railroad station, which marked ten minutes past six, and fell through the roof. It did little damage beyond shattering numerous windows. The railroad station is directly opposite my hotel. The second shell tore through the chimney of the hotel. The kitchen was filled with bits of bricks and mortar. The breakfast coffee was spoiled.

Captain X., who was here on a special mission, made his escape in a motor, accompanied by a squad of khaki-clad couriers on motor-cycles. The guests of the hotel scuttled to the cellars.

It was nearly seven o'clock before the infantry began firing in earnest. The only French troops in the town were some of a regiment of the line. The French had no artillery when the action opened.

The position was in a certain state of defence, which might have been improved. However, the streets were barricaded and a field of wire entanglements stretched across the bridge, which was also commanded by a mitrailleuse.

Dinant lies in a well, one might say, on both banks of the Meuse. High limestone cliffs tower above the town. On the east bank these are steep, and are crowned by an ancient fort known as the citadel.

The fort dominates the whole adjacent country. On the west bank of the Meuse the town scrambles up a hillside, covered with trees.

When the engagement opened I joined Commandant A. and Lieutenant B., who were in charge of the detachment defending the bridge.

At this time the Germans were making a strong effort to capture the citadel. It was held by a small French force, perhaps one company.

The cliffs resounded with the rifle and gun fire. The din and the falling shells drove the population en masse to the "caves."

Members of the Volunteer Hospital Corps, however, hurried along on their bicycles searching the streets for wounded.

The German mountain batteries fired with accuracy, although the small projectiles had little effect. I picked up the fuse of one shell, a Dapp, cut at 4,000 mètres.

About ten o'clock the Germans held the crest of the cliffs across the river, and soon took the citadel. They sent down a veritable hail of lead on the defenders. Behind the cover of the bridge abutments the French reply gallantly. Thus the fight goes on for an hour. One hears nothing save the irregular explosions of rifles, the machine-like sputterings of the mitrailleuse, punctuated by the shock of shell fire. It rains, but this in no way halts the firing. About thirty wounded are brought in when the

French troops change position to the high ground back of the town. A sudden increase in the volume of sound tells me that the wished-for reinforcements have arrived. Soon a half-company of a regiment crowd into the hotel, expecting to find there a good field of fire. They bring with them a dozen frightened women who have been hiding in the station.

About noon the firing slackens, and the rain ceases. A few limping figures in blue coats and red trousers stagger into the hotel. A doctor stationed here gives them first-aid attention. While the lull continues a woman crosses to the pillar-box and drops in a postcard.

About one I return to my post of observation. The German flag has been hoisted over the citadel. This is a signal for renewed firing. The sight of the hated flag seems to rouse the French troops to fury. About 2 p.m. I hear for the first time the welcome sound of French field artillery. One of the first shots cuts the German flag across. Two French batteries have arrived, and they hail projectiles into the citadel with extraordinary accuracy. Another line regiment arrives to reinforce the troops here, and under a smothering fire I see the heads of the Germans that dotted the ramparts of the fort begin to disappear. At this time I also hear heavy firing in the south-east. About ten minutes before six I cannot distinguish a German on the ramparts. The only firing is some scattered shooting from the

French side. A cheer greets the coming of another new regiment, and soon the French troops are back in the positions they held in the morning.

But the road back of the bridge is dotted with the dead. They lie in all sorts of contorted positions. Their blue coats are splashed with red, their red trousers are stained a deeper crimson.

And the cheers of the troops who have just arrived die down as they pass this grim testimony of what war means.

As it was the intention of the French to hold the Dinant bridge at all hazards, their strongest force was placed behind the abutment wings of this bridge. These are limestone block walls, about three feet high, and offer good cover. But this cover would have been vastly improved if the walls had been capped with sandbags. There was plenty of time to have so improved this defence. Again, the field of fire before this position was poor. But the gravest mistake was the neglect to construct protected approaches to the advanced position. Reinforcements had to be rushed across an open field of fire, where they suffered unnecessary casualties. And when the French line of defence had to be changed, and the troops withdrawn to a higher position behind the town, they suffered heavily because they must pass along a road swept by the German fire. All of which should have been provided against. This is not written in a spirit of criticism, but simply to call attention to

certain mistakes that will, in the future, surely be corrected.

The French are under a severe handicap in the matter of uniform. It is over a dozen years since the Boer War, and certainly they should have discarded the blue coat and red trousers for a more neutral colour. They have covered the red crown of their caps with blue. This is to prevent their being discovered by aeroplane scouts. But the flamboyant uniform of the line regiments makes a fair mark, as far as the modern rifle is effective. In groups they are all the gunner asks for a target.

On the other hand, the Germans have adopted a grey-green colour that is almost invisible. Yesterday, with a first-class glass, I had difficulty in locating individuals.

What I have written applies with more force to the Belgian troops. These soldiers are as conspicuous as claret stains on a new tablecloth.

On my way here I passed some four or five regiments of infantry. Though the men are young, they are going into this war with a seriousness unusual in the French. Of course, the Gallic temperament is not changed. They still show their "esprit" and their gaiety is not altogether extinguished. Perhaps the solemnity I have alluded to is more noticed among the officers than the men. They are as grave as schoolmasters. All of which is a good sign.

I have been particularly struck by the professional

atmosphere of the artillery officers. It needs but a glance of the eye to be sure that this arm will perform splendid service under their direction.

The Germans had so many men massed in the occupied portions of Belgium by this time that temporary checks did not stem what one correspondent aptly described as a tidal wave of troops sweeping irresistibly through the valley of the Meuse. Japan, who had sent Germany an ultimatum with regard to Kiao-Chau, declared war on receiving no reply by the stipulated time; but, it is unnecessary to add, this fact had no influence on the operations of the German troops in Belgium. Telegrams sent off on Sunday stated that a big battle was developing in the neighbourhood of Charleroi—Mons, and that the Germans in order to ensure the uninterrupted and safe passage of their army, had occupied all the villages between Louvain and Alost. The Liège forts, it was officially announced, were still holding out, but the Germans had "contained" them by a large force of soldiers. Attention was rather concentrated on the forts at Namur, to subdue which the Germans had advanced their heavy siege guns. It was said on Monday, August 24th, that "Namur had fallen," but no confirmation of this statement could be obtained,

and it was generally taken as meaning that the invaders had managed to enter the town, but that the forts were still holding out. An official message from Brussels on the following Wednesday evening said that Namur had not yet fallen.

In the meantime refugees were hurrying from Ostend, to which city both Belgian and German wounded were being brought. The cross-Channel steamers were crowded, and Belgian refugees who had come away from Brussels and Tirlemont made their appearance in London.

CHAPTER VI

British Troops in Action—Their "Customary Coolness"—Zeppelin at Antwerp—German Atrocities—Lord Kitchener's Speech

The British Expeditionary Force was engaged in the battle at Mons, and it was subsequently stated that the soldiers had been fighting for thirty-six hours on end. A short statement by the Press Bureau was more usefully expanded into the following account, which was issued by the French Embassy and summed up the situation as it existed on Monday night, August 24th:

On the west of the Meuse the English army, which was on our left, has been attacked by the Germans. Its behaviour under fire was admirable, and it resisted the enemy with its customary coolness.

The French army which operated in this region attacked. Our army corps, with the African troops in the first line, carried forward by their over-eager-

ness, were received with a very murderous fire. They did not fall back, but later by a counter-attack by the Prussian Guard they were compelled to retire. They did so only after having inflicted enormous loss on the enemy. The flower of the Prussian Guard suffered very severely.

On the east of the Meuse our troops advanced across very difficult ground. They met with a vigorous attack as they left the woods, and were compelled to retire after fierce fighting on the south of the Semoy.

At the order of General Joffre, our troops and the English troops have taken up their position on the covering line, which they would not have quitted had not the splendid courage of the Belgian army permitted us to enter Belgium. The covering line is intact. Our cavalry has not suffered. Our artillery has proved its superiority. Our officers and our soldiers are in splendid physical and moral condition.

As a result of the orders given, the struggle will change its aspect for several days. The French army will for a time remain on the defensive. When the proper moment comes, as chosen by the Commander-in-Chief, it will resume a vigorous offensive.

Our losses are severe. It will be premature to estimate them or to estimate those of the German army, which, however, has suffered so severely as to

be compelled to halt in its counter-attack and establish itself in new positions.

The communiqué then proceeds to deal with the situation in regard to Lorraine. It says :

Yesterday we four times counter-attacked from the positions we occupy on the north of Nancy, and we inflicted very severe losses on the Germans.

Generally speaking, we retain full liberty to use our railway system, and every sea is open for our re-provisioning. Our operations have permitted Russia to enter into action and to reach the heart of Eastern Prussia. It is, of course, regrettable that, owing to difficulties in execution which could not have been foreseen, our plan of attack has not achieved its object. Had it done so it would have shortened the war, but in any case our defence remains intact in face of an already weakened enemy.

All Frenchmen will deplore the momentary abandonment of the portions of annexed territory which we had already occupied. On the other hand, certain portions of the national territory must, unfortunately, suffer from the events of which they will be the theatre. The trial is inevitable, but will be temporary.

Thus, some detachments of German cavalry, belonging to an independent division operating on the extreme right, have penetrated into the Roubaix

—Tourcoing district, which is defended only by Territorial forces. The courage of our brave people will support this trial with unshaken faith in our final success, which is beyond doubt.

In telling the country the whole truth, the Government and the military authorities afford it the strongest possible proof of their absolute confidence in a victory, which depends only on our tenacity and perseverance.

A thrilling description of the behaviour of the British troops at Mons was given by Mr. A. J. Rorke, the correspondent of the Central News Agency, who wired from Paris on Monday night :

Graphic stories of how the British troops at Mons fought during the two days in which they bore the brunt of the main German advance reached Paris in the early hours of this morning, when officers arriving from the front reported at the War Office, and, in subsequent conversation with their closest personal friends, told of the wonderful coolness and daring of our men. The shooting of our infantry on the firing line, they said, was wonderful. Every time a German's head showed above the trenches and every time the German infantry attempted to rush a position there came a withering rifle fire from the khaki-clad forms lying in extending formation along a big battle front.

The firing was not the usual firing of nervous men, shooting without aiming and sometimes without rhyme or reason, as is so often the case in warfare. It was rather the calm, calculated riflemanship of the men one sees on the Stickledown range firing with all the artificial aids permitted to the match rifle expert whose one concern is prize money.

When quick action was necessary the firing and the action of the men was only that of prize riflemen firing at a disappearing target. There was no excitement, no nervousness; just cool, methodical efficiency. If the British lost heavily heaven only knows what the Germans must have lost, because, as one of their wounded officers (whom the British took prisoner) remarked, "We had never expected anything like it; it was staggering."

The British troops went to their positions silently but happily. There was no singing, because that was forbidden, but as the khaki-clad columns deployed and began to crawl to the trenches there were various sallies of humour in the different dialects of English, Irish, and Scottish counties. The Yorkshireman, for instance, would draw a comparison between the men they were going to fight and certain dogs that won't fight which the Yorkshire collier has not time to waste upon at the pit-head; the Cockney soldier was there with his sallies about "Uncle Bill," and every Irishman who went into the firing line wished

he had the money to buy a little Irish horse, so that he could have a slap at the Uhlans.

And the cavalry! Officers coming from the front declare that our cavalrymen charged the much-vaunted German horsemen as Berserks might have done. When they got into action with tunics open, and sometimes without tunics at all, they flung themselves at the German horsemen in a manner which surprised even their own officers, who had themselves expected great things of them. The Uhlans, whose name and fearful fame had spread terror among the Belgian peasants and the frontier villages of France, were just the sort of men the British troopers were waiting for. The Britishers, mostly Londoners, who, as Wellington said, make the best cavalry soldiers in the world, were dying to have a cut at them; and when they got into clinches the Uhlans had the surprise of their lives.

From the scene of battle, the point of interest in the European war drama, as far as England is concerned, shifted in the small hours of this morning to the railway station at X, where officers and men of the Army Service Corps awaited the arrival of the wounded—the British wounded from the firing line. Everything was perfectly organised; there was no theatrical display; the officers and men of the British army waited silently and calmly for the toll of war, which they had been advised was on its way.

The station at the time was crowded with Americans coming to England from Paris after their release from Switzerland, and cheer after cheer, in which the French in the station joined, echoed under the arched roof. Britishers who were there felt very proud of their Empire and their soldiers at that moment. The men who were waiting for the wounded had not been in the first line of battle it was true—that was not their job—but their work was probably the greatest of all. It was for them to watch and wait, while every fibre of their inmost being thrilled to the note of war; and yet to restrain their desires while they practised that which the Iron Duke called the wonderful "two o'clock in the morning" courage. So they waited in a draughty station for their comrades, thrown back temporarily from the scene of action, to fit them to return, if possible, immediately.

While the crowd waited for the wounded, train after train rolled slowly through carrying more of "our boys" to the active front. They were sleeping in horse trucks alongside their equine friends; they were sleeping in cattle wagons; yet they stood up when the cheering reached their ears, looking fresh, fit, clean, and healthily British from their service caps to their puttee straps. All young, all full-blooded, all British; happy and eager to get at grips in what is to them a holy war. And then, at the end, as the boat-train was creeping out in the early morning, the wounded arrived.

It was my privilege to witness, on the road between Boulogne and Paris last Saturday, a scene as picturesque and deeply inspiring as a page from Froissart. The two English Cardinals, Cardinal-Archbishop Bourne and the Cardinal Abbot Gasquet, famed as an historian, had left London to journey to the Conclave at Rome. On the line the train in which they travelled was stopped, and by a curious chance a train in which a regiment including in its ranks a large number of Irish Catholics — these men, like the Plantagenets of old, wearing a sprig of green in their head-dress—was drawn up for a moment alongside.

The Cardinals, who, under their cassocks, wore the red of their rank, stepped into the corridor, and, leaning out of a window, said together, "May God bless you, my children."

In an instant every Catholic soldier in the open trucks of the troop train dropped to his knees to receive the Cardinals' blessing. It appears, maybe, a simple affair, but in its spontaneity and sincerity, its mingling of the spiritual with the grimly material, it was eloquent and moving beyond the comprehension of those who only read what others saw.

On August 25th the Germans made a raid by Zeppelin airship on Antwerp and dropped several bombs on the palace, the St. Elizabeth Hospital,

and other public buildings. Twelve persons were blown to pieces in different parts of the city, and shots aimed at the airship proved ineffectual. The same evening the Belgian Government gave out the following official statement regarding the shocking atrocities committed by the invading forces in various parts of the occupied territory :

In spite of solemn assurances of goodwill and long-standing treaty obligations, Germany has made a sudden savage and utterly unwarranted attack on Belgium.

However sorely pressed she may be, Belgium will never fight unfairly and never stoop to infringe the laws and customs of legitimate warfare. She is putting up a brave fight against overwhelming odds, she may be beaten, she may be crushed, but, to quote our noble King's words, " she will never be enslaved."

When German troops invaded our country, the Belgian Government issued public statements which were placarded in every town, village, and hamlet, warning all civilians to abstain scrupulously from hostile acts against the enemy's troops. The Belgian Press daily published similar notices broadcast through the land. Nevertheless, the German authorities have issued lately statements containing grave imputations against the attitude of the Belgian civilian

population, threatening us at the same time with dire reprisals. These imputations are contrary to the real facts of the case, and as to threats of further vengeance, no menace of odious reprisals on the part of the German troops will deter the Belgian Government from protesting before the civilised world against the fearful and atrocious crimes committed wilfully and deliberately by the invading hosts against helpless non-combatants, old men, women, and children.

Long is the list of outrages committed by the German troops, and appalling the details of atrocities, as vouched for by the Committee of Inquiry recently formed by the Belgian Minister of Justice and presided over by him. This committee comprises the highest judicial and university authorities of Belgium, such as Chief Justice Van Iseghem, Judge Nys, Professors Cottier, Wodon, etc.

The following instances and particulars have been established by careful investigations based in each case on the evidence of reliable eye-witnesses :

German cavalry occupying the village of Linsmeau were attacked by some Belgian infantry and two gendarmes. A German officer was killed by our troops during the fight and subsequently buried at the request of the Belgian officer in command. No one of the civilian population took part in the fighting at Linsmeau. Nevertheless, the village was invaded at

dusk on August 10th by a strong force of German cavalry, artillery, and machine guns. In spite of the formal assurances given by the Burgomaster of Linsmeau that none of the peasants had taken part in the previous fight, two farms and six outlying houses were destroyed by gun-fire and burnt. All the male inhabitants were then compelled to come forward and hand over whatever arms they possessed. No recently discharged firearms were found. Nevertheless, the invaders divided these peasants into three groups, those in one group were bound and eleven of them placed in a ditch, where they were afterwards found dead, their skulls fractured by the butts of German rifles.

During the night of August 10th, German cavalry entered Velm in great numbers. The inhabitants were asleep. The Germans, without provocation, fired on M. Deglimme-Gevers' house, broke into it, destroyed furniture, looted money, burnt barns, hay and corn stacks, farm implements, six oxen, and the contents of the farmyard. They carried off Madame Deglimme, half-naked, to a place two miles away. She was then let go, and was fired upon as she fled, without being hit. Her husband was carried away in another direction, and fired upon. He is dying. The same troops sacked and burned the house of a railway watchman.

Farmer Jef Dierick, of Neerhespen, bears witness to the following acts of cruelty committed by German

cavalry at Orsmael and Neerhespen on August 10th, 11th, and 12th :

An old man of the latter village had his arm sliced in three longitudinal cuts ; he was then hanged head downwards and burned alive. Young girls have been maltreated, and little children outraged at Orsmael, where several inhabitants suffered mutilations too horrible to describe. A Belgian soldier belonging to a battalion of cyclist carabineers, who had been wounded and made prisoner, was hanged, whilst another, who was tending his comrade, was bound to a telegraph pole on the St. Trond road and shot.

On Wednesday, August 12th, after an engagement at Haelen, Commandant Van Damme, so severely wounded that he was lying prone on his back, was finally murdered by German infantrymen firing their revolvers into his mouth.

On August 9th, at Orsmael, the Germans picked up Commandant Knapen, very seriously wounded, propped him up against a tree, and shot him. Finally they hacked his corpse with swords.

In different places, notably at Hollogue sur Geer, Barchon, Pontisse, Haelen, and Zelck, German troops have fired on doctors, ambulance bearers, ambulances, and ambulance wagons carrying a Red Cross.

At Boncelles a body of German troops marched into battle carrying a Belgian flag.

On Thursday, August 6th, before a fort at Liège, German soldiers continued to fire on a party of Belgian soldiers (who were unarmed, and had been surrounded while digging a trench) after these had hoisted the white flag.

On the same day, at Vottem, near the fort of Loncin, a group of German infantry hoisted the white flag. When Belgian soldiers approached to take them prisoners the Germans suddenly opened fire on them at close range.

Harrowing reports of German savagery at Aerschot have reached the Belgian Government at Antwerp from official local sources. Thus on Tuesday, August 18th, the Belgian troops occupying a position in front of Aerschot received orders to retire without engaging the enemy. A small force was left behind to cover the retreat. This force resisted valiantly against overwhelming German forces, and inflicted serious losses on them. Meanwhile practically the whole civilian population of Aerschot, terrorised by the atrocities committed by the Germans in the neighbouring villages, had fled from the town.

Next day, Wednesday, August 19th, German troops entered Aerschot without a shot having been fired from the town and without any resistance whatever having been made. The few inhabitants that remained had closed their doors and windows in compliance with the general orders issued by the Belgian Govern-

ment. Nevertheless the Germans broke into the houses and told the inhabitants to quit.

In one single street the first six male inhabitants who crossed their thresholds were seized and shot at once under the very eyes of their wives and children. The German troops then retired for the day, only to return in greater numbers on the next day, Thursday, August 20th.

They then compelled the inhabitants to leave their houses and marched them to a place 200 yards from the town. There, without more ado, they shot M. Thielmans, the Burgomaster, his fifteen-year-old son, the clerk of the Local Judicial Board, and ten prominent citizens. They then set fire to the town and destroyed it.

The following statement was made by Commandant Georges Gilson, of the 9th Infantry of the Line, now lying in hospital at Antwerp :

> I was told to cover the retreat of our troops in front of Aerschot. During the action fought there on Wednesday, August 19th, between six and eight o'clock in the morning, suddenly I saw on the high road, between the German and Belgian forces, which were fighting at close range, a group of four women, with babies in their arms, and two little girls clinging to their skirts. Our men stopped firing till the women

got through our lines, but the German machine guns went on firing all the time, and one of the women was wounded in the arm. These women could not have got through the neighbouring German lines and been on the high road unless with the consent of the enemy.

All the evidence and circumstances seem to point to the fact that those women had been deliberately pushed forward by the Germans to act as a shield for their advance guard, and in the hope that the Belgians would cease firing for fear of killing the women and children.

This statement was made and duly certified in the Antwerp Hospital on August 22nd by Commandant Gilson, in the presence of the Chevalier Ernst N. Bunswyck, Chief Secretary to the Belgian Minister of Justice, and M. de Cartier de Marchienne, Belgian Minister to China.

Further German atrocities are continuously being brought to notice and made the subject of official and expert inquiry by the proper authorities.

In issuing the above statements to the English Press, the only comment the Press Bureau could offer was that these atrocities appeared to be committed in villages and throughout the country side with the deliberate intention of terrorising

the people, and so making it unnecessary to leave troops in occupation of small places or to protect lines of communication. In large places like Brussels, where the diplomatic representatives of neutral Powers are eye-witnesses, there appeared to have been no excesses.

When Parliament met on August 25th, after a short adjournment, Lord Kitchener, Minister for War, gave the following account of the situation in the House of Lords:

As this is the first time that I have had the honour of addressing your lordships, I must ask for the indulgence of the House. In the first place I desire to make a personal statement. Noble lords on both sides of the House doubtless know that, while associating myself in the fullest degree for the prosecution of the war with my colleagues in His Majesty's Government, my position on this Bench does not in any way imply that I belong to any political party, for as a soldier I have no politics.

Another point is that my occupation of the post of Secretary of State for War is a temporary one. The terms of my service are the same as those under which some of the finest portions of our manhood, now so willingly stepping forward to join the colours, are engaging. That is to say for the war; or if it lasts longer, then for three years.

It has been asked why the latter limit has been fixed. It is because should this disastrous war be prolonged—and no one can foretell with any certainty its duration—then, after three years' war, there will be others, fresh and fully prepared, to take our places and see this matter through.

The very serious conflict in which we are now engaged on the Continent has been none of our seeking. It will undoubtedly strain the resources of our Empire and entail considerable sacrifices on our people. These will be willingly borne for our honour and the preservation of our position in the world, and will be shared by our dominions beyond the seas, now sending contingents and assistance of every kind to help the Mother Country in this struggle.

If I am unable, owing to military consideration for the best interests of the allied armies in the field, to speak with much detail on the present situation of our army on the Continent, I am sure your lordships will pardon me for the necessary restraint which is imposed upon me.

The Expeditionary Force has taken the field on the French north-west frontier, and has advanced to the neighbourhood of Mons, in Belgium. Our troops have already been for thirty-six hours in contact with a superior force of German invaders. During that time they have maintained the traditions

of British soldiers, and have behaved with the utmost gallantry. The movements which they have been called upon to execute have been those which demand the greatest steadiness in the soldiers, and skill in their commanders. Sir John French telegraphed to me at midnight, as follows :

> "In spite of hard marching and fighting, the British force is in the best of spirits."

I replied :

> "Congratulate troops on their splendid work. We are all proud of them."

As your lordships are aware, European fighting causes greater casualties than the campaigns in which we are generally engaged in other parts of the world. The nation will, I am sure, be fully prepared to meet whatever losses and sacrifices we may have to make in this war. Sir John French, without having been able to verify the numbers, estimates the loss since the commencement of active operations at rather more than 2,000 men *hors-de-combat.*

As to the work of the last few weeks, I have to remark that when war was declared, mobilisation took place without any hitch whatever, and our Expeditionary Force proved itself wholly efficient,

well equipped, and immediately ready to take the field.

The Press and the public have, in their respective spheres, lent invaluable aid to the Government in preserving a discreet silence, which the exigencies of the situation obviously demanded, and I gladly take this opportunity of bearing testimony to the value of their co-operation. The hands of the military authorities were also strengthened by the readiness with which the civilian community faced and accepted the novel situation created by the issue of requisitions for horses, transport, supplies and billets.

The railway companies, in the all-important matter of the transport facilities, have more than justified the complete confidence reposed in them by the War Office, all grades of railway services having laboured with untiring energy and patience. And it is well to repeat that the conveyance of our troops across the Channel was accomplished, thanks to the cordial co-operation of the Admiralty, with perfect smoothness and without any untoward incident whatever.

We know how deeply the French people appreciate the value of the prompt assistance we have been able to afford them at the very outset of the war, and it is obvious that not only the moral but the material support our troops are now rendering must prove to be a factor of high military significance

in restricting the sphere and determining the duration of hostilities.

Had the conditions of strategy permitted, everyone in this country would have rejoiced to see us ranged alongside the gallant Belgian army in that superb struggle against desperate odds which has just been witnessed. But, although this privilege was perforce denied to us, Belgium knows of our sympathy with her in her sufferings, of our indignation at the blows which have been inflicted on her, and also of our resolution to make sure that in the end her sacrifices will not have been unavailing.

While other countries engaged in this war have under a system of compulsory service brought their full resources of men into the field, we, under our national system, have not done so, and can, therefore, still point to a vast reserve drawn from the resources both of the Mother Country and of the British Dominions across the Seas.

The response which has already been made by the great Dominions, abundantly proves that we did not look in vain to these sources of military strength, and while India, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are all sending us powerful contingents, in this country the Territorials are replying with loyalty to the stern call of duty which has come to them with such exceptional force.

Over seventy battalions have, with fine patriotism,

already volunteered for service abroad, and when trained and organised in the larger formations, will be able to take their places in the line.

The 100,000 recruits for which, in the first place, it has been thought necessary to call, have been already practically secured. This force will be trained and organised in divisions similar to those which are now serving on the Continent.

Behind these we have our Reserves. The Special Reserve and the National Reserve have each their own part to play in the organisation of our national defence.

The Empires with whom we are at war have called to the colours almost their entire male population. The principle we, on our part, shall observe, is this, that while their maximum force undergoes a constant diminution, the reinforcements we prepare shall steadily and increasingly flow out, until we have an army in the field which in numbers, not less than in quality, will not be unworthy of the power and responsibilities of the British Empire.

I cannot, at this stage, say what will be the limits of the forces required, or what measures may eventually become necessary to supply and maintain them. The scale of the Field Army which we are now calling into being is large and may rise in the course of the next six or seven months to a total of thirty divisions continually maintained in the field. But if the war

should be protracted, and if its fortunes should be varied or adverse, exertions and sacrifices beyond any which have been demanded will be required from the whole nation and Empire, and where they are required we are sure they will not be denied to the extreme needs of the State by Parliament or the people.

THE CASE FOR BELGIUM

It has been sought in the preceding chapters to give as detailed a description as the information at our disposal will allow of the fighting in the North—*i.e.* the struggle for Liège and Namur, and the subsequent series of closely-contested battles from Tirlemont to Mons. The case for the Belgian people, and an account of the sufferings which had to be endured by a peaceful, non-combatant population, will be found mentioned also in the course of the narrative. The diplomatic case for Belgium has already been given to the public in another volume of this series ("How the War Began"); but the details of this case, and the reasons why this country is taking part in the war, have been so well summed up by Mr. Asquith that a few extracts from his speech are necessary to make this volume complete.

The first of a series of meetings to bring home to the people of England the vital importance of the questions at issue was held in the Guildhall

on Friday, September 4th; and the speakers included the Prime Minister, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Balfour. In the course of his remarks Mr. Asquith referred to the Arbitration Treaty between Great Britain and the United States, which he mentioned at a previous Guildhall meeting some three and a-half years previously. "We were very confident three years ago in the rightness of our position," he said. "We are equally confident to-day, when reluctantly and against our will, but with a clear judgment and with a clean conscience we find ourselves involved with the whole strength of this Empire in a bloody arbitrament between Might and Right."

Mr. Asquith continued:

The issue has passed out of the domain of argument into another field, but let me ask you, and through you the world outside, what would have been our condition as a nation to-day, if we had been base enough, through timidity, or through a perverted calculation of self-interest, or through a paralysis of the sense of honour and duty, if we had been base enough to be false to our word and faithless to our friends?

Our eyes would have been turned at this moment, with those of the whole civilised world, to Belgium, a small State, which has lived for more than seventy

years under the several and collective guarantee to which we, in common with Prussia and Austria, were parties; and we should have seen, at the instance and by the action of two of these guaranteeing Powers, her neutrality violated, her independence strangled, her territory made use of as affording the easiest and most convenient road to a war of unprovoked aggression against France.

We, the British people, would at this moment have been standing by with folded arms, and with such countenance as we could command, while this small and unprotected State, in defence of her vital liberties, made an heroic stand against overweening and overwhelming force. We should have been admiring, as detached spectators, the siege of Liège, the steady and manful resistance of their small army; the occupation of their capital, with its splendid traditions and memories; the gradual forcing back of their patriotic defenders of their native land to the ramparts of Antwerp; countless outrages suffered through buccaneering levies exacted from the unoffending civil population, and finally, the greatest crime committed against civilisation and culture since the Thirty Years' War—the sack of Louvain and its buildings, its pictures, its unique library, its unrivalled associations—shameless holocaust of irreplaceable treasures, lit up by blind barbarian vengeance.

What account should we, the Government and the people of this country, have been able to render to the tribunal of our national conscience and sense of

honour if, in defiance of our plighted and solemn obligations, we had endured, if we had not done our best to prevent—yes, and to avenge—these intolerable outrages?

For my part I say that sooner than be a silent witness, which means in effect a willing accomplice, of this tragic triumph of force over law, and of brutality over freedom, I would see this country of ours blotted out of the page of history.

Several German newspapers, distorting the facts of the case with remarkable disingenuousness, had roundly asserted that England had chosen to take part in the war for purely materialistic reasons, and that this country was not so anxious to vindicate the principle of Belgian neutrality as to secure the oversea trade of the German Empire. Even if Mr. Asquith had not spoken on the subject at all, it would have been realised sooner or later that there was no foundation for this assertion; for it was hardly likely, if we had had only this object in view, that a community of practical business men would have tolerated the enormous sacrifice of life and money involved in attempting by war to displace German exports to European and non-European countries.

As this argument was advanced with such persistence in the German Press, it may be worth

while dwelling on it for a moment. The total value of the German export trade for 1913 was just over £495,000,000, and of our own export trade £635,000,000. With many German products, such as dyes, and certain chemical and electrical goods, this country has never been able to compete. At the beginning of the war, for example, when the German coast had been blockaded by our Fleet, we should have been compelled to spend millions of pounds in order to experiment with, and later on to manufacture, aniline dyes analogous to those produced in Germany. The same remark applies to many classes of electrical goods. Millions would have had to be spent on experiments before we began to manufacture the products, assuming—in many cases a large assumption—the success of the experiments. This, too, at a time when money was notoriously scarce, when accommodation could not be obtained from the banks, and when the Government had just announced that it wanted a hundred millions sterling as a first instalment of war expenses.

Apart from this, even if we had thought of capturing Germany's export trade, or a large part of it, it was clear that other nations had

conceived the same notion and were getting ready to act upon it. Japanese merchants, for instance, had their eyes fixed on the markets of China, and manufacturers in the United States had been showing, even before the war, a deep interest in South America. Is it likely, in these circumstances, that a nation such as this would have seen at least half a million men withdrawn from productive work, and the expenditure of millions of money, purely for the sake of competing with the United States and Japan in foreign markets?—always realising that the war must end some time, that Germany must once more begin to manufacture, and that competition would be as severe as ever in less than a decade? No; if we can capture some of Germany's export trade, that will be a mere incidental in the struggle for national existence, and the profits represented thereby will but ill balance the lives and money which will have to be sacrificed in the meantime.

Fortunately, Mr. Asquith took the opportunity, when speaking at the Guildhall, to make it clear that Great Britain and the British Dominions were not actuated by materialistic aims in entering upon the greatest campaign in history.

There was something to be considered besides profits. Having referred to the sacking of Louvain, Mr. Asquith went on to say:

That is only a phase—a lurid and illuminating phase—in the contest in which we have been called, by the mandate of duty and of honour, to bear our part. The cynical violation of the neutrality of Belgium was, after all, but a step—a first step—in a deliberate policy of which, if not the immediate, the ultimate and the not far-distant aim was to crush the independence and the autonomy of the Free States of Europe. First Belgium, then Holland and Switzerland—countries, like our own, imbued and sustained with the spirit of liberty—were one after another to be bent to the yoke; and these ambitions were fed and fostered by a body of new doctrines, a new philosophy, preached by professors and learned men.

Free and full self-development, which to these small States, to ourselves, to our great and growing Dominions over the seas, to our kinsmen across the Atlantic, is the well-spring and life-breath of national existence—that free self-development is the one capital offence in the code of those who have made force their supreme divinity, and upon its altars are prepared to sacrifice both the gathered fruits and the potential germs of the unfettered human spirit. I use this language advisedly.

This is not merely a material; it is also a spiritual conflict. Upon its issue everything that contains

promise and hope, that leads to emancipation, and a fuller liberty for the millions who make up the mass of mankind, will be found sooner or later to depend.

The Prime Minister proceeded to combat the absurd suggestions that the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904, and the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, were likely to prove a menace to the German Empire:

Let me now just for a moment turn to the actual situation in Europe. How do we stand? For the last ten years, by what I believe to be happy and well-considered diplomatic arrangements, we have established friendly and increasingly intimate relations with the two Powers, France and Russia, with whom in days gone by we have had, in various parts of the world, occasions for constant friction, and now and again for possible conflict. Those new and better relations, based in the first instance upon business principles of give-and-take, have matured into a settled temper of confidence and goodwill. They were never in any sense or at any time, as I have frequently said in this hall, directed against other Powers.

No man in the history of the world has ever laboured more strenuously or more successfully than my right honourable friend, Sir Edward Grey, for that which is the supreme interest of the modern world—a general and abiding peace. It is, I venture to think, a very superficial criticism which suggests

that, under his guidance, the policy of this country has ignored, still less that it has counteracted and hampered, the Concert of Europe. It is little more than a year ago that under his presidency, in the stress and strain of the Balkan crisis, the Ambassadors of all the Great Powers met here day after day, curtailing the area of possible differences, reconciling warring ambitions and aims, and preserving, against almost incalculable odds, the general harmony.

And it was in the same spirit, and with the same purpose, when a few weeks ago Austria delivered her ultimatum to Servia, that the Foreign Secretary—for it was he—put forward the proposal for a mediating Conference between the four Powers who were not directly concerned—Germany, France, Italy, and ourselves. If that proposal had been accepted actual controversy would have been settled with honour to everybody, and the whole of this terrible welter would have been avoided.

With whom does the responsibility rest for its refusal and for all the illimitable suffering which now confronts the world? One Power, and one Power only, and that Power is Germany. That is the fount and origin of this world-wide catastrophe.

We are persevering to the end. No one who has not been confronted, as we were, with the responsibility of determining the issues of peace and war can realise the strength and energy and persistency with which we laboured for peace. We persevered by every expedient that diplomacy could suggest, straining almost to the breaking point our most

cherished friendships and obligations, even to the last making effort upon effort, and hoping against hope. Then, and only then, when we were at last compelled to realise that the choice lay between honour and dishonour, between treachery and good faith—when we at last reached the dividing line which makes or mars a nation worthy of the name, it was then, and then only, that we declared for war.

Is there anyone in this hall, or in this United Kingdom, or in the vast Empire of which we here stand in the capital and centre, who blames or repents our decision? (Cries of "No!") For these reasons, as I believe, we must steel ourselves to the task, and in the spirit which animated our forefathers in their struggle against the domination of Napoleon, we must, and we shall, persevere to the end.

At the Guildhall, as in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister referred to the noble example shown by the Belgian people in summoning all their available forces to repel the aggression of a Power which had been presumed to be friendly. He said:

It would be a criminal mistake to under-estimate either the magnitude, the fighting quality, or the staying power of the forces which are arrayed against us. But it would be equally foolish and equally indefensible to belittle our own resources whether for resistance or attack. (Cheers.) Belgium has shown us by a memorable and a glorious example

what can be done by a relatively small State when its citizens are animated and fired by the spirit of patriotism. In France and Russia we have as allies two of the greatest Powers of the world engaged with us in a common cause, who do not mean to separate themselves from us any more than we mean to separate ourselves from them. (Cheers.)

Having paid this tribute—how well deserved it was, and to what a remarkable extent the German check at Liège influenced the subsequent developments of the campaign, the world is now beginning to realise—Mr. Asquith paid an equally warranted tribute to our own Fleet:

We have upon the seas the strongest and most magnificent Fleet which has ever been seen. The Expeditionary Force which left our shores less than a month ago has never been surpassed, as its glorious achievements in the field have already made clear, not only in material and equipment, but in the physical and the moral quality of its constituents.

As regards the Navy, I am sure my right honourable friend (Mr. Winston Churchill) will tell you there is happily little more to be done. I do not flatter it when I say that its superiority is equally marked in every department and sphere of its activity. We rely on it with the most absolute confidence, not only to guard our shores against the possibility of invasion, not only to seal up the gigantic battleships of the enemy in the inglorious

seclusion of their own ports, whence from time to time he furtively steals forth to sow the seeds of murderous snares which are more full of menace to neutral ships than to the British Fleet—our Navy does all this, and while it is thirsting, I do not doubt, for that trial of strength in a fair and open fight which is so far prudently denied it, it does a great deal more.

It has hunted the German mercantile marine from the high seas. It has kept open our own sources of food supply and largely curtailed those of the enemy, and when the few German cruisers which still infest the more distant ocean routes have been disposed of, as they will be very soon, it will achieve for British and neutral commerce passing backwards and forwards from and to every part of our Empire a security as complete as it has ever enjoyed in the days of unbroken peace. Let us honour the memory of the gallant seamen who in the pursuit of one or another of these varied and responsible duties have already laid down their lives for their country.

As not the least important object of the Guildhall meeting was to stimulate recruiting, Mr. Asquith naturally referred to the army and its work. At a very early stage in the war both Germany and France had called up practically their last available man. Indeed, so hard pressed did the German Empire find itself

after five weeks' fighting that arrangements, it was officially announced, were made for giving instruction in rifle shooting to boys aged from sixteen to nineteen. It was not, of course, intended that these lads should at once take an active part in the fighting: but it was assumed that by the time they reached their military age they would be familiar with the use of weapons and more or less adequately drilled. Retired officers who were too old to take part in the campaign were ordered to take the boys in hand.

To remedy the inevitable wastage in the French Army, as well as in our own Expeditionary Force—which, a few days before Mr. Asquith's speech, had already fought gallantly and lost some 14,000 men at Mons and Charleroi—it was desired that armies should be raised in England, trained, and sent out to the fighting line as required. For this purpose Lord Kitchener had intimated that at least 500,000 men would be required, and calls were made for 100,000 men at a time. The oversea Dominions, and, above all, India—where the German Government had vainly tried to bring about a disloyal outbreak—hastened to come forward with offers of men; but all this did not

relieve the home country of its responsibility. Speaking on this subject, Mr. Asquith said :

In regard to the Army, there is call for a new, a continuous, a determined, and a united effort. For, as the war goes on, we shall have not merely to replace the wastage caused by casualties, not merely to maintain our military power at its original level, but we must, if we are to play a worthy part, enlarge its scale, increase its numbers, and multiply many times its effectiveness as a fighting instrument. The object of the appeal which I have made to you, my Lord Mayor, and to the other Chief Magistrates of our capital cities, is to impress upon the people of the United Kingdom the imperious urgency of this supreme duty.

Our self-governing Dominions throughout the Empire, without any solicitation on our part, demonstrated, with a spontaneousness and a unanimity unparalled in history, their determination to affirm their brotherhood with us, and to make our cause their own. From Canada, from Australia, from New Zealand, from South Africa, and from Newfoundland the children of the Empire assert, not as an obligation but as a privilege, their right and their willingness to contribute money, material, and, what is better than all, the strength and sinews, the fortunes, and the lives of their best manhood.

India, too, with no less alacrity has claimed her share in the common task. Every class and creed, British and natives, Princes and people, Hindus and

Mahommedans, vie with one another in noble and emulous rivalry. Two divisions of our magnificent Indian Army are already on their way. We welcome with appreciation and affection their proffered aid. In an Empire which knows no distinction of race or cause we all alike, as subjects of the King-Emperor, are joint and equal custodians of our common interests and fortunes. We are here to hail with profound and heartfelt gratitude their association, side by side and shoulder to shoulder, with our home and Dominion troops, under the flag which is the symbol to all of a unity that a world in arms cannot dissever or dissolve.

With these inspiring appeals and examples from our fellow-subjects all over the world what are we doing, and what ought we to do here at home ?

Mobilisation was ordered on August 4th. Immediately afterwards Lord Kitchener issued his call for 100,000 recruits for the Regular Army, which has been followed by a second call for another 100,000. The response up to to-day gives us between 250,000 to 300,000. I am glad to say that London has done its share. The total number of Londoners accepted is not less than 42,000.

I need hardly say that that appeal involves no disparagement or discouragement of the Territorial Force. The number of units in that force who have volunteered for foreign service is most satisfactory and grows every day. We look to them with confidence to increase their numbers, to perfect their organisation and training, and to play efficiently the

part which has always been assigned to them, both offensive and defensive, in the military system of the Empire.

But to go back to the expansion to the Regular Army. We want more men—men of the best fighting quality—and if for a moment the number who offer themselves and are accepted should prove to be in excess of those who can at once be adequately trained and equipped, do not let them doubt that prompt provision will be made for the incorporation of all willing and able men in the fighting forces of the kingdom. We want first of all men, and we shall endeavour to secure them, and men desiring to serve together shall, wherever possible, be allotted to the same regiment or corps. The raising of battalions by counties or municipalities with this object will be in every way encouraged.

But we want not less urgently a larger supply of ex-non-commissioned officers, and the pick of the men with whom in past days they served, men, therefore, whom in most cases we shall be asking to give up regular employment and to return to the work of the State, which they alone are competent to do. The appeal we make is addressed quite as much to their employers as to the men themselves. The men ought to be absolutely assured of reinstatement in their business at the end of the war. Finally, there are numbers of commissioned officers now in retirement, who are much experienced in the handling of troops and have served their country in the past. Let them come forward, too, and show their willing-

ness, if need be, to train bodies of men for whom at the moment no cadre or unit can be found.

Mr. Asquith concluded one of the most eloquent speeches he had ever delivered with a warning to the optimists who had predicted a too easy task for the allied forces, and recommended those present—and, through them, the British Empire generally—to cultivate the virtue of patience:

I have little more to say. Of the actual progress of the war I will not say anything, except that, in my judgment, in whatever direction we look there is abundant ground for pride and for confidence. I say nothing more, because I think we should all bear in mind that we are at present watching the fluctuations of fortune only in the early stages of what is going to be a protracted struggle. We must learn to take long views, and to cultivate, above all other faculties, those of patience, endurance, and steadfastness.

Meanwhile, let us go, each of us, to his or her appropriate place in the great common task. Never had a people more or richer sources of encouragement and inspiration. Let us realise first of all that we are fighting as a united Empire in a cause worthy of the highest traditions of our race; let us keep in mind the patient and indomitable seamen, who never relax for a moment, night or day, their stern vigil of the

lonely sea; let us keep in mind our gallant troops, who to-day, after a fortnight's continuous fighting, under conditions which would try the mettle of the best army that ever took the field, maintain not only an undefeated, but an unbroken front.

Finally, let us recall the memories of the great men and the great deeds of the past, commemorated, some of them, in the monuments which we see around us on these walls; nor forgetting the dying message of the younger Pitt, his last public utterance, made at the table of one of your predecessors, my Lord Mayor, in this very hall: England has saved herself by her exertions, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example.

The England of those days gave a noble answer to his appeal, and did not sheath the sword until after nearly twenty years of fighting the freedom of Europe was secured. Let us go and do likewise.

As the published documents now at our disposal sufficiently show, the German Government matured its preparations for the greatest war in history in what they believed to be the certain hope that Great Britain would not intervene. It was fully believed at Berlin that our domestic differences would prevent any designs at helping Belgium which the Government here might wish to carry out. The sudden change in national feeling, which reconciled political opponents like Sir Edward Carson and Mr. John Redmond, or

Mr. Asquith and Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Winston Churchill and Lord Charles Beresford, could not be comprehended on the other side of the North Sea, and completely upset the plans of the German Government. This loyalty to the nation, taking the place of loyalty to party at a time of national emergency, was demonstrated in the House of Commons as soon as the crisis became acute. At the Guildhall, too, Mr. Bonar Law once more proved how ready the Opposition were to sink their differences with the Government, and to support the Liberal Ministry in its endeavours to bring the campaign to an honourable conclusion.

When Mr. Asquith, after an enthusiastic burst of applause, had sat down, Mr. Bonar Law rose, amid an equally enthusiastic demonstration of welcome, and said:

It would, indeed, be impossible for me to add anything to the force of the appeal which has just been addressed by the Prime Minister to our people. But I am glad to be here as representing one of our great political parties in order to show clearly that in this supreme struggle, and in everything connected with it until it is brought to a triumphant close, the head of our Government must speak not as the leader of a party but as the mouthpiece of a nation.

We are a peace-loving people, but never, I believe, in our history has the whole nation been so convinced as it is to-day that the cause for which we are fighting is righteous and just. We strove for peace by all means up to the last moment, but when, in spite of our efforts, war came, we could not stand aside. The honour and the interests of Great Britain—and believe me, they go together—alike forbade it. It was inevitable that we must be drawn into this world struggle, and the only question was whether we should enter it honourably or be dragged into it with dishonour.

This war is a great crime—one of the greatest in history. But it is a crime in which as a nation we have no share. Now, as always, for nearly a generation, the key of peace or war was in Berlin. The head of the German Government had but to whisper the word "Peace," and there would have been no war. He did not speak that word. He drew the sword, and may the accursed system for which he stands perish by the sword!

War has come, and we are fighting for our life as truly as Belgium or France, where the tide of battle, with all its horrors, is rolling on. As Cromwell said of his Ironsides we can say with equal truth to-day: "We know what we are fighting for, and we love what we know."

We are fighting for our national existence, for everything which nations have always held most dear. But we are fighting for something more—we are fighting for the moral forces of humanity. We

are fighting for respect for public law, and for the right of public justice, which are the foundation of civilisation. We are fighting, as the Prime Minister has said, for Right against Might. I do not attempt what Burke has declared to be impossible—to draw up an indictment against a whole people—but this I do say, that the German nation has allowed itself to be organised as a military machine which recognises no law except the law of force, which knows no right except the right of the strongest. It is against that we are fighting to-day.

The spirit in which this war was entered into was shown clearly in the words addressed to our Ambassador at Berlin by the German Chancellor. "You are going to war," he said, "for a scrap of paper." (Cries of "Shame!")

Yes, but a "scrap of paper" with which was bound up the solemn obligation, and with that obligation the honour, of a great nation—a "scrap of paper" in which was involved also the right to independence, to liberty, the right even of existence, of all the small nations of the world. It is for that "scrap of paper" that the Belgian soldiers have fought and died, that the Belgian people, by what they have done, and by what they have endured, have won for themselves immortal fame. It is for that "scrap of paper," and all that it means, that we, too, have already watered with the blood of our sons the fair fields of France, and for which we shall conquer or perish.

Like Mr. Asquith, Mr. Bonar Law emphasised

the fact that the war was a spiritual and not a materialistic conflict; and he denounced in no less vigorous terms the atrocities which had been perpetrated by the German Army on its way through a friendly country. After his reference to the "scrap of paper," he went on to say:

The words which I have quoted show not merely the spirit in which the war was entered into, but the spirit in which it is being conducted to-day. When reports first reached us of German atrocities in Belgium I hoped for the sake of our common humanity that they were untrue, or at least exaggerated. We can entertain that hope no longer. The destruction of Louvain has proclaimed to the world in trumpet tones what German methods are. It has fixed upon German honour an indelible stain, and the explanations which it has been attempted to give of it have only made that stain the deeper.

War at the best is terrible. It is not from the ordinary soldier, it is not from below, that restraint can be expected. It must come, if it come at all, from above. But here the outrages have come not from below but from above. They are not the result of accident, but of design. They are part of a principle—the principle by any means, at any expense of the lives of defenceless men or helpless women and children, to spread terror in the country and to facilitate the German arms. This is a moral and a spiritual conflict. Believe me, in the long run, the

moral and the spiritual are stronger than the material forces.

The object of this meeting, and of the speech to which we have just listened, is to appeal to the manhood of our country to rally once again round the old flag. That appeal will not be made, is not being made, in vain. Our people had only to realise, as at first they did not quite realise, what were the issues at stake to come forward with all the spirit of their fathers. That lesson is being driven home now by influences stronger far than any speeches. It is being taught by the heroic steadfastness of the Belgian people. It is being taught now by the knowledge that but for the close shield of the Navy—the shield which if we fail to conquer cannot save us—our fate to-day would be the fate of Belgium. It is being taught, above all by the accounts, meagre though they are, of what has been done by our soldiers on the field of battle. With that mistaken estimate of themselves and of others, which is one of the explanations of this war, the Germans, before and after the outbreak, have spoken of us as a decadent nation. Do they say that to-day?

Let the long-drawn-out fight that began at Mons give the answer. There our troops, pitted against the choicest bodies of the German army, outnumbered by nearly three to one as I believe, were undefeated and unbroken. When the story of that fight comes to be written, it is my belief that it will form as glorious a page as is to be found in the whole annals of our history. The men will come.

There is no doubt of that. Everywhere I find the same spirit. Everyone is asking, "What can I do to help my country?" The men will come.

There is one thing more only which I should like to say. Many of those whom I am addressing are, like the Prime Minister and myself, unable to take our place in the fighting line. It is not right, it is not fair, that we should make an appeal for sacrifices to the patriotism of those only who are able and willing to fight our battles. An equal sacrifice is demanded of those who remain behind. Let us not as a Government merely, but as a nation, realise our obligation and make a vow and keep it, that no dependent of any man who is fighting our battles shall go hungry while we have bread to eat. And let us realise also, as we have not always realised in the past, that our soldiers are the children of the State, and that they have the first claim upon the resources of our nation.

When Mr. Balfour had supported the leader of the Unionist party there were loud calls for Mr. Churchill, who made a very brief but pointed speech on the Navy and its work:

My Lord Mayor and Citizens of London,—You may rely with good confidence upon the strength and efficiency of our naval defence. That defence will enable you to live and to work and draw the means of life and power from the utmost ends of the earth. It will give you the time, it will give you the means

to create the powerful military force which this country must wield before this trouble is brought to its conclusion.

Certain I am of this, that you have only to endure to conquer.

You have only to persevere to save yourselves and to save all those who rely upon us. You have only to go right on, and at the end of the road, be it short or be it long, victory and honour will be found.

Apropos of the German atrocities at Liège, the brutal character of the German troops, and Mr. Bonar Law's reference to the fact that the outrages were instigated from above and were not to be blamed wholly on the soldiers themselves, a word may be added regarding one or two philosophical misconceptions which have arisen as to the origin of this modern trait in the character of the German people. It is often asserted that the philosophy of Nietzsche has been responsible for not merely encouraging but developing the German belief in physical power and brute force; and amid the host of "professors," on whom blame is cast for urging on the Teuton to develop his country at the expense of his neighbours, Nietzsche has frequently been singled out for special mention as a man in whose works the Kaiser has always taken an especial interest.

This belief is quite erroneous. Nietzsche, who poked bitter fun at the clumsiness and stupidity of his countrymen, who cracked jokes over the musicians and philosophers most dear to the German heart, and who, before all else, repudiated Prussianism lock, stock, and barrel, was certainly not a writer likely to appeal to the Kaiser or to any of the makers of modern Germany. The reader cannot fail to be impressed by the striking fact that the "professors" who have written in support of German development have one and all disclaimed any connection with Nietzsche or his teachings. The thinker who is really responsible, even more so than Treitschke, for Germany's attempt to burst her confines and to increase her possessions, is a man of a very different order.

A year or two ago there appeared the English translation of a book by Houston Stewart Chamberlain, "The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century." This was a book dealing generally, in so far as a connected thread ran through it, with racial problems, and the author's admiration for the Teutonic race was expressed without limits. Chamberlain

came of English stock, but he developed German sympathies, lived in Germany, and wrote in German. For the Aryans, gradually turned into the Teutons and modern Germans, Chamberlain claimed all the virtues of mankind; and his net was spread wide. The Founder of the Christian Church was of Teutonic stock, according to the teachings of the Chamberlain school; and so was Dante. The Latin races, on the contrary, were held to be decadent—it was only a matter of time before they would have to disappear and make way for the strong, virile race from the North.

This book created a profound impression at the time of its publication in Germany—and in German, although the author had been an Englishman. It was read widely in Court circles, by the "professors," and by military men. It was brought to the notice of the Kaiser, who ordered several hundred copies to be sent to him. These—the number was said to be as many as eight or nine hundred—were distributed, by the Imperial command, to heads of schools, burgomasters, and the like, throughout the length and breadth of the German Empire. To the views of the Chamberlain school Nietzsche

was unalterably opposed; and his choicest fulminations were directed against the group of thinkers who wrote with unstinted admiration of the Teutonic race. To use his own expression, the victories of 1870-1871 had given the Germans an inflated conception of their own importance in the world, and the material wealth that accrued to them during the next two decades ruined completely the old German philosophy and culture which had been the pride and hope of such men as Goethe, Schiller, Beethoven, and Schopenhauer.

Next to Chamberlain, the greatest influence in the modern development of Germany was the famous historian, Heinrich von Treitschke. Like Chamberlain, Treitschke distorted some facts to suit his purpose, and neglected others which would have spoilt his theories; but there is no doubt about the vigour of his thought and the lucid style in which he wrote. He lived from 1834 to 1896, and specialised on historica subjects from his 'teens. His view was that the Germans were the greatest people on earth, that it was their duty to the world to subjugate other peoples and races, and that nothing should prevent the fulfilment of this task. These

opinions, enunciated at first in a series of brilliant historical essays, found their most dramatic, one might almost say their most sensational, expression in Treitschke's "History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century," a work which has for many years been regarded in Germany as scarcely less important than the Bible itself. It was Treitschke who first poured contempt on the French as a race of "decadents," and who prophesied that the most difficult reckoning would be with England.

These two men had, and still have, innumerable followers; nor should we overlook Bismarck's speeches. But there was a third and independent influence who must not be overlooked, either. This is General von Bernhardi, whose book "Germany and the Next War" has now become notorious, as much in the original as in the English and other translations. With a curious smattering of philosophy and religion, General von Bernhardi advocated the opinion that war was not merely difficult to avoid, but that it was desirable and necessary for maintaining the virility and strength of a nation. For this reason he did not profess to shrink from a European campaign, no matter how dire the

effects of it might be; and his book contains a full *exposé* of what the German plans should be, on land and sea, on the outbreak of war. He has full confidence in the German army, and no less confidence in the German navy; and he is determined that the power of Prussia and the Prussian system shall be used to secure for his country the place in the sun to which he thinks she is entitled. He ridicules Peace Conferences, Geneva Conventions, and the like—for war is war, and not, as the German Ambassador in Washington has just told us, an afternoon tea-party—and war is to be waged ruthlessly against France and this country. "France," writes General von Bernhardi, "must be crushed so that she can never again cross our path."

It is obvious to any reader who compares the thoughts and sentiments in all these works with the Kaiser's speeches that his Majesty is a careful student of them. To him both Heine and Nietzsche, who preferred the old to the new Germany, are enemies of his Empire; but men like Bernhardi, Treitschke, Chamberlain, Bismarck, and Frederick the Great are safe guides. The Kaiser has, throughout his speeches, made many references to Frederick the Great, whose

literary works deserve more study than is usually accorded them in England. They contain the views of a man who, bullied in childhood by a coarse father, had to fend for himself and to make his own discoveries in war and social administration. His experiences are summed up, now and then, in a series of snappy epigrams which are even more to the point than Bismarck's. Within his limits, the Emperor William II. is at least original, and it would hardly be fair to accuse him of plagiarism; but he has, at least, had recourse to his great ancestor for inspiration.

A survey of the influences at work in modern Germany, then, must include the writings of the men just referred to, and often of their followers as well. When these writings are considered we shall be able to realise why Mr. Bonar Law had to refer so pointedly to the Belgian atrocities and their instigation "from above." The Kaiser himself has declared more than once that war must be waged ruthlessly; and Treitschke, Bernhardi, Frederick the Great, Bismarck, and Chamberlain unite in holding weakness up to ridicule and in emphasising the necessity for brutality. In the face of these

teachings, which have influenced the ruling caste in the German Empire for more than a generation, we need not wonder if the invaders of Belgium and France have been urged on by their officers to excesses which have called forth the censure of the civilised world. When the Emperor himself advises his soldiers to "leave a name like Attila," we may be sure that his officers will not be behindhand in enforcing the instruction.

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